Daily Report

Central Eurasia

FBIS-SOV-92-017
Monday
27 January 1992

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FBIS-SOV-92-017 *27 January 1992*

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Yeltsin Claims Missiles Not To Target U.S.

LD2601022392 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0125 GMT 26 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Sergey Kuznetsov—Moscow TASS International Service in Russian at 0650 GMT on 26 January kills the following item and reports that a new version will be issued]

[Text] New York, 26 Jan (TASS)—Soon strategic nuclear missiles under Russia's control will not be aimed at the United States. This was revealed by Russian President Boris Yeltsin on 25 January in an exclusive interview with the American TV company ABC.

"We want to change the military doctrine, and we no longer consider the United States to be our potential adversary [protivnik]," underlined the Russian president. According to him, the targeting systems on intercontinental ballistic missiles will be changed so that they are not aimed at American cities.

The Russian president revealed that he intends to make the corresponding official statement on 27 January and to repeat it at the UN Security Council session in New York on 31 January. According to B. Yeltsin, he has already informed U.S. President George Bush about this decision.

The TV company plans to broadcast the interview, which the Russian president gave to ABC observer Barbara Walters on 25 January in Moscow, on 31 January.

TASS Reissues Report

LD2601084692 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0753 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Report by TASS correspondent Sergey Kuznetsov]

[Text] New York, 26 Jan (TASS)—Soon inter-continental ballistic missiles under the control of Russia will not be targeted on a single U.S. city. This was stated by Russian President B.N. Yeltsin in an exclusive interview with the American TV company ABC on 25 January.

"We want to change our military doctrine...and no longer to consider the United States as our potential enemy," stressed the Russian president. According to him, changes will be made to the targeting systems for ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads so that they are no longer aimed at American cities.

The Russian president announced that he intends to make an appropriate official statement on 27 January, and then to repeat it at a session of the UN Security Council in New York on 31 January. According to Yeltsin, he has already informed U.S. President George Bush of this decision.

The TV company plans to broadcast in full the interview, which the Russian president gave to ABC observer Barbara Walters in Moscow on 25 January, on Friday 31 January.

Further on Yeltsin Pledge

PM2601192192 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 1

[TASS report: "President Yeltsin Has Stated that Russian Missiles Will No Longer Be Targeted on U.S. Cities. However, White House Intends To Renounce 1972 Treaty in Order To Prepare for 'Star Wars'"]

[Text] ABC has reported: "Significant new steps to eliminate the threat of nuclear war have started to glimmer on the horizon. In an interview with our television company Russian President Boris Yeltsin has stated that the Russian nuclear arsenal will soon cease to be targeted on U.S. cities.

"One of the United States' main worries is that, despite our changed relations with Russia, its nuclear weapons are still targeted on U.S. cities. However, as President Yeltsin told us on 25 January, 'all this will change as of 27 January.'"

The television company showed a fragment of the interview in which Boris Yeltsin confirmed that the Soviet nuclear missiles under Russia's control are still targeted on the United States. "But I want to make a statement 27 January and repeat it 31 January in New York, when I am at the UN Security Council session," he said. "We want to change our military doctrine and not regard the United States as our potential enemy, and to change the system for the individual targeting of ballistic missiles so that they are not targeted on U.S. cities." ABC noted that, according to Boris Yeltsin, he had informed U.S. President G. Bush of his decision before publicly announcing it.

Boris Yeltsin's statement does not mean that the United States will be completely rid of the threat from Russia, the ABC commentary said. However, this is one of the important steps that both sides have been taking to make sure that the unthinkable never happens. Now, after the Russian president's statement, the possibility of a nuclear nightmare has become more remote. However, the threat still physically exists. Missiles and warheads still remain in place, as well as the combat crews to launch them. They can do so. But this statement clearly demonstrates that the Russians do not intend to do so... Out of approximately 1,500 Russian intercontinental missiles capable of reaching targets on U.S. territory, the majority are aimed at military installations, not at U.S. cities, which, according to Boris Yeltsin, will now be removed from the list of targets. Furthermore, when the missiles are on the launch pads, it does not take long to retarget them. Nevertheless, Russia's initiative is of value as a statement of intent. Taking into account next

week's expected U.S. announcement of an end to production of all nuclear bombs, both former opponents are demonstrating that the nuclear threat is disappearing fast.

CBS reported as follows from the White House: "President Bush has spent Saturday, 25 January, working out the details of his 'State of the Union' message, which may be the most important of his whole presidency. It is expected that plans to reduce military expenditure will be announced in it. But the Russians' actions have already changed the situation. The Russian parliament has approved a budget which, according to U.S. intelligence analysts, will lead to a sharp reduction in the Red Army. This will certainly prompt U.S. congressional calls for the President to act more swiftly, since the disarmament race is unexpectedly speeding up. G. Bush is expected to announce abandonment of the MX strategic missile and some of the 'Trident' missiles installed in submarines. A situation is emerging where there may be a fight between the Pentagon and Congress, which has its own pet military programs. The new Pentagon budget will also envisage resources helping the former Soviet republics to dismantle their nuclear weapons. U.S. strategic planners are now most worried about how the dismantling of nuclear weapons by both sides will proceed."

According to a WASHINGTON POST report, "the U.S. Administration has taken a step that may lead to abandonment of the 1972 ABM Treaty. Washington does not like it because of the restrictions on the Strategic Defense Initiative. As U.S. officials stated this week, the administration has removed the 1972 agreement from the list of the most important existing arms control treaties which it is calling on the former Soviet republics to observe. Several high-ranking U.S. officials have called this the first step in efforts headed by the Pentagon to renounce the treaty by taking advantage of the legal uncertainties surrounding past U.S.-Soviet documents. At the same time, others are saying that President Bush has not made an official decision that the U.S. should get out of the treaty."

Ukraine, Belarus To Lose Tactical Nuclear Arms

LD2401173492 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1526 GMT 24 Jan 92

[From the "Military News" section: "In Early February All Tactical Nuclear Weapons Will Be Withdrawn From the Territory of Ukraine and Belarus"—POSTFACTUM headline]

[Text] According to confidential sources, in early February all tactical nuclear weapons will be withdrawn from the territory of Ukraine and Belarus. Strategic weapons (mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles) are expected to leave Belarus by 1995.

Woerner Confirms Attempts To Recruit Experts

LD2501174992 Hamburg DPA in German 1442 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Excerpt] Munich (DPA)—According to NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner, several nuclear scientists from the former Soviet Union have already been recruited by third countries. Without naming the specific countries, Woerner told the Munich magazine BUNTE: "I have information that attempts were made to recruit nuclear scientists from the former Soviet Union. In some cases these have been successful."

The danger at the moment, Woerner continued, is "not so much nuclear weapons, but the experts." The NATO secretary general appealed to Western governments and CIS states, saying: "Efforts must be made, by way of bilateral negotiations, to offer these scientists, who have lost their livelihood, research opportunities in different fields. They must be paid well enough in order to prevent their recruitment as nuclear mercenaries." [passage omitted]

Institute 'Opened Wide' to Foreign Contacts

LD2301185292 Moscow TASS in English 1745 GMT 23 Jan 92

[Text] Arzamas, January 23 TASS—The recently top secret base for the development of Soviet nuclear and laser weapons, known among specialists as "Arzamas-16" will possibly be turned in the years ahead into a world centre for the development of laser, nuclear and other promising equipment for peaceful purposes. Nina Volkova, chief of the press service of the Research Institute of Experimental Physics, told TASS that the research Institute of Experimental Physics in this city in the Nizhny Novgorod Region, that was a secret centre for the development of nulear weapons in the USSR, is being opened wide to foreign nuclear scientists who are ever more often paying visits to it. Three delegations visited the Institute over the past six weeks—a delegation from the Los Alamos Laboratory, the analogue of "Arzamas-16" in the U.S., as well as scientists from Germany and Czechoslovakia.

Prominent nuclear scientist Nerses Krikoryan, chief of Nuclear Safety Department of the Los Alamos Laboratory, said there is nothing like this in the USA and that the Soviet institute has considerably outstripped the Los Alamos Laboratory.

Dan Stillman, chief of a department at the same laboratory, said scientists in many countries have long been keen on the idea of creating an international centre for research into laser equipment. He said that a better place for the headquarters of such a corporation can hardly be found. Karel Radlena, researcher at the Prague Institute of Physics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, supports the idea of creating an international centre for laser equipment near Arzamas.

EBRD President Proposes Warheads for Debts

PM2701092692 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 22 Jan 92 p 3

[A. Matveyev article: "Shall We Pay in Warheads?"]

[Text] Handing over property to pay off debts is nothing new. But paying debts with nuclear warheads—that is unprecedented. That is the option proposed to the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] states by J. Attali, president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development [EBRD]. According to his idea, the elimination of the nuclear arsenals in which the former Soviet Union was so "rich" could be exchanged for an equivalent reduction in the burden of debts of the sovereign republics to Western states (let me remind you that this debt totals $60-70 billion).

In an interview for a weekly published by the bank, Attali stated that his plan will help both to settle the foreign debt and to destroy the nuclear warheads. Attali believes, not without reason, that a reduction in the foreign debt of the former USSR linked to a phased dismantling of the nuclear munitions in the hands of the CIS, could be very useful to the West. Financing this project will, its originator believes, cost less than 1 percent of the total annual level of military spending of the industrially developed countries belonging to the G-7 group. As a result of such a deal "a practical opportunity will arise to reassure the West about the threat posed by the remaining warheads."

You cannot deny the banker's logic. But it is clear from his words that what he has in mind is the elimination of those nuclear arms that are not subject to reduction under the treaties and commitments undertaken by the CIS republics. That is to say, he is talking about complete nuclear disarmament.

But here we are entitled to ask how acceptable such a deal is for us and whether it will not prove too costly for us—even from the financial viewpoint. It is well known that the implementation of existing disarmaments of accords is a very serious problem for the republics now. It is no accident that the West is talking about offering special-purpose financial aid for the destruction of tactical nuclear arms. In that case, will not the destruction of the remaining nuclear arms demand far more resources from the CIS states? Will their elimination not be an even greater burden on our economy than the prospect of paying off the debts? More than half of the loans to the former USSR were provided not by Western governments, but by private banks. They are hardly likely to agree to the means of extinguishing the debts that Attali proposes.

The most important point is this. How will the complete elimination of nuclear weapons affect the security of the CIS republics? Let us not forget that in conditions where the future of our Armed Forces is very vague, it is nuclear arms that form the basis of the defense capability of all the Commonwealth members. Would we not be selling ourselves short by exchanging warheads for debts?

Private Companies To Run Plants in Republics

OW2301172992 Tokyo KYODO in English 1347 GMT 23 Jan 92

[Text] Tokyo, Jan. 23 KYODO—Separate private companies will take over the operations of nuclear power stations in Russia, the Ukraine, and Kazakhstan, former government officials in the Soviet Union said Thursday [23 January].

The sources, close to a visiting mission of the former Soviet Ministry of Atomic Power Industry, said Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin is expected to issue a decree on privatization of the nuclear power stations in the near future.

The five-member delegation, led by Vyacheslav Kozhin, director of the economics department at the ministry, arrived January 19 for a 10-day visit at the invitation of the Japanese Government.

Under the basic plan, the separate private power companies will be managed and controlled loosely by an interrepublic organization, to be based in Russia, the sources said.

The interrepublic body is expected to work out uniform guidelines on management and operations with technical assistance from the European Community, the United States, and Japan, the source said.

Bush Address to CIS Aid Conference Noted

PM2701112592 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 24 Jan 92 p 3

[A. Balusov report: "The West, It Seems, Is Offering Us a Helping Hand. Will We Be Able to Take Advantage of It?"]

[Text] "Our task is to give a joint response to the dramatic revolution which swept away Soviet communism and led to the creation of 12 new countries," President Bush said, addressing the opening of the coordinating conference on assisting the new independent states which began in Washington 22 January. He urged the countries participating in the conference to show "equal commitment" to the fulfillment of the task of helping the building of democracy and economic freedoms in the former Soviet Union and to help the independent states "make the great leap from communism to democracy, from the command economy to the free market, and from authoritarianism to liberty."

After dwelling on the international community's specific tasks to do with overcoming the critical situation in the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] countries, Bush proposed action in two directions. First, to continue vigorous actions this winter and throughout 1992 to satisfy those states' demand for food, medicines, fuel, and housing. Second, to pool international efforts and give technical assistance to the economic growth and development of new institutions of the free market. In addition, Bush announced that he is proposing to the U.S. Congress that it approve the allocation of over $600 million for humanitarian aid and technical assistance to the Commonwealth states. Thus, in the President's words, the sum of the U.S. aid programs will exceed $5 billion.

"It is in the West's interests to see a stable CIS," D. Hurd, British Foreign Secretary, stated in an interview on America's ABC TV. Otherwise the Commonwealth will disintegrate into a great many small and bankrupt state formations warring among themselves. That is precisely why it is necessary to offer them a helping hand now."

Another question of extreme concern to the West is that of nuclear arms control. In Hurd's opinion, nuclear weapons must be under unified control in Moscow and the republics on whose territory nuclear weapons are stationed must have a missile launch blocking system. But they must not be able to decide the question of launching such missiles for themselves.

Japan took the most restrained position at the conference. Japanese Foreign Minister Watanabe put forward three conditions for the granting of aid. In his opinion, the CIS countries must first complete the transition to a market economy, perform further political transformations, and in the international arena pursue a "policy based on law and justice." In the opinion of commentators, these demands conceal Japan's desire to secure Russia's agreement to return the South Kuril islands. Japan will give emergency humanitarian aid to the Far East regions of Russia first of all, M. Watanabe said.

Characterizing the results of the conference's first day of work, FRG Foreign Minister Genscher stated that "good results have been achieved and there are positive prospects." It may be said right now, he noted, that the U.S. Administration's initiative to convene the conference was right.

Private Business 'Must Play Role'

LD2401182192 Moscow TASS in English 1406 GMT 24 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Matyash]

[Text] Washington January 24 TASS—U.S. private business can and must play an important role in rendering all-out humanitarian and technological aid to the peoples of the Commonwealth of Independent States, First Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleberger stated in his message to the conference on aid to CIS nations, which ended here on Thursday [23 January]. The conference was attended by representatives from more than 200 charity organisations of the United States.

The message expressed the hope that U.S. private business would cooperate closely with federal bodies to meet the urgent needs of Commonwealth nations in humanitarian and technological aid. It noted that in many cases private business was able to render humanitarian and technological aid to the CIS more promptly and efficiently than government institutions.

The conference devoted primary attention to problems of aiding the CIS nations with food and medicines, helping them develop democratic institutions and establish a market economy.

Deputy Secretary for Agriculture Ann Veneman said that U.S. plans were based from the very outset on the need for partnership between state and private sectors of the United States.

According to Ronald Roskins, director of the U.S. Agency for International Development, this body deems it to be its duty to render every possible humanitarian aid to the most needy regions of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of the Treasury John Robson said that in addition to its valuable and urgent humanitarian aid to the CIS, the United States should teach the Russians the art of doing business. He said it was the purpose of the United States to help central and eastern Europe, as well as the CIS nations, materialise their hope for radical market reforms.

Ex-Ambassador of the United States in Moscow Arthur Hartman told TASS that private U.S. business was ready to render aid to the peoples of Russia and the CIS during the current difficult period of their history. He believes

this aid will help overcome tremendous difficulties cropping up on the Commonwealth's road to a market economy.

Air Lift Planned

PM2701093792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 1

[IZVESTIYA's Artur Blinov and Boris Pilyatskin report: "Operation 'Provide Hope.' First Transporter With Humanitarian Aid To Arrive in CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] 10 February, Washington Meeting Decides"]

[Text] The two-day conference on coordinating humanitarian aid to the republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] has ended in Washington. Representatives of 47 countries and seven international groups took part in it.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, speaking at a news conference following this unprecedented meeting, said that practical work had been done to coordinate a "global response" to the emergency situation in which the republics of the former Soviet Union have found themselves. Significant results have been achieved. In particular, the conference's working groups formulated practical plans for aid to the peoples of the Commonwealth republics in five areas—food supply, medical services, provision of housing and power, and in the sphere of technical aid.

According to J. Baker, the geographic provenance of the proposals received attests to the global nature of international community's efforts. Offers have been made by countries in Europe, Asia, the Persian Gulf, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. The task of compiling a "consolidated package" of commitments to provide aid or grant credits and loans was not raised at the conference. However, a number of delegations announced such plans.

President G. Bush spoke in his statement of the White House's intention to ask the Congress to approve new aid to the CIS republics to the tune of $645 million. The ROK expressed readiness to provide a loan of $800 million. Thailand is willing to provide credits for rice purchases of $450 million. Saudi Arabia is willing to "freeze" the previous credit of $1.25 billion. Oman is ready to provide $200 million to develop Azerbaijan's oil industry. Argentina said that it is willing to accept 100,000 emigres from the CIS, while Czechoslovakia is willing to treat sick children.

The statement given at the news conference by NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner attracted attention; he said that the North Atlantic alliance as an organization "will provide assistance in those areas where others are not at work," in particular in organizing the transport and distribution of aid and providing communications. NATO was the USSR's main adversary. This organization is now offering help to the peoples of the former Soviet Union. "Nothing can be a better symbol of the fact that the 'cold war' has ended." We are in actual fact, not just verbally, replacing confrontation with cooperation. I think that we are sending an extremely strong signal to the citizens of the former Soviet Union: "We are no longer enemies. We have become friends."

Disagreements are known to have surfaced during the discussions behind closed doors. German Foreign Minster Hans-Dietrich Genscher criticized Japan for linking the amount of its aid with a political problem—the return of the "Northern Territories." Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis, addressing journalists, voiced regret that Europeans were not resolute enough and allowed Americans to take the initiative and convene the conference in Washington. These views also reflect the stance espoused by other members of the EC—Germany and France. You know that the EC accounts for 75 percent of all Western aid to the former USSR—roughly $80 billion.

The United States was also criticized for the fact that representatives of the CIS republics were not invited to Washington. However, J. Baker accounted for his position by saying that he did not want their presence to fuel competition between the donors. At the same time he said that next week a contact group formed by people involved in the Washington meeting would fly to Minsk to discuss plans for external assistance and aid with representatives of the republics. Without doubt, the question of rational distribution of the aid will also be on the agenda. Concern was voiced frequently at the Washington conference as to how aid will be delivered to the localities and whether it will actually reach those who need it most.

The practical results of the meeting in Washington will start to be felt forthwith. For one or two weeks as of 10 February an "airlift" will link the CIS republics and Georgia with air bases in Western Europe. U.S. Air Force cargo aircraft (making a total of 54 trips) will deliver food and medicine. Interestingly, the deliveries will include 17,400 tonnes of rations that have remained unused since the end of the war against Iraq and a million doses of antibiotics.

The air operation has been code-named "Provide Hope." Explaining the purpose of it, J. Baker said. "It will graphically show the peoples of the former Soviet Union that those who in the past prepared for war against them now have the courage and conviction to tell them via their military: 'We will strengthen peace.'"

It has been announced in Washington that another conference in which representatives of the CIS—in addition to the countries donating the aid—will take part will be held in three or four months in Lisbon. Evidently having taken its partners' criticism to heart, Japan suggested Tokyo as the place for the following, the third meeting.

PRAVDA Reviews Conference

PM2401134992 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 24 Jan 92 p 5

[Correspondent Vladislav Drobkov [V.D.] report: "Making Former Enemy Friend and Partner"]

[Text] Washington, 23 Jan—The international Coordinating Conference on Aid to the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] in the U.S. capital finishes its work today. At plenary meetings and during the working group sessions participants from 47 countries and almost a dozen international organizations—ranging from the IMF to the United Nations and NATO—discussed ways of pooling efforts to help the former Soviet Union's republics.

It is expected that their recommendations and advice will be able to ensure the most effective use of the money and material resources, mainly food, that many countries and organizations have already allocated to avert the threat of hunger and the spread of mass disturbances in the CIS and Georgia. However, I am afraid that the lack of any effective mechanism to supervise the implementation of these recommendations will make it hard to put them into effect.

Nevertheless even the exchange of opinions on the problem of aid for the former Soviet republics was of considerable benefit. It enabled the world community to gain a clearer idea of both the acuteness of the crisis in which these countries have now found themselves and the scale, complexity, and challenging nature of the task of breaking the deadlock in which the former superpower's former and incumbent leaders have plunged it.

The statement by U.S. President G. Bush urging that the historic opportunity of turning "our former enemies into our friends and partners" not be missed set the tone of all the conference's work.

Clearly responding to the concern voiced by a number of West European countries (is Washington trying to assume leadership of the entire aid program to the former Soviet republics—V.D.), George Bush stressed the need to avoid "fruitless debates about which of us has done more or less than the others and who should be in charge of responding to this historic challenge." He even said that the EC has "shouldered the main burden." Demonstrating U.S. readiness to do its share of the overall effort, the President said that he would ask the Congress to approve additional appropriations of more than $600 million for aid to the CIS.

The heads of various countries' diplomatic departments and leaders of financial organizations and international groupings who addressed the conference spoke of the contribution that they have already made or are prepared to make to the common cause. German Foreign Minister H.-D. Genscher spoke of the food aid and funding for housing construction that we are being sent. Three former socialist countries—Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland—urged the meeting's participants to incorporate in the CIS aid program steps to compensate for their losses due to the collapse of trading links between Eastern and Central Europe and the former USSR. They also suggested sending us their food products, services, and technical experience "given the relevant financial agreements." U.S. Secretary of State James Baker insisted on the need for "global collective efforts" to ensure that "democracy and the free market put down lasting roots" in the new independent states. NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner described the extraordinary efforts that the bloc is making to move food and other humanitarian aid to the CIS and possible involvement in medical projects. Representatives of the EC and Japan, international financial organizations, and the Netherlands spoke of plans to develop power generation, restructure the financial system, and modernize managerial structures in the former Soviet republics.

By and large there was an earnest and sometimes even concrete discussion of the future of international efforts to promote market reforms in the republics of the collapsed Union. Nevertheless it seemed strange that representatives of these republics themselves were not present in the U.S. State Department's vast Benjamin Franklin hall where the conference's plenary sessions were held and in the working groups' committees. The brisk winds of global change seem to have brought to Moscow the mores of a rural rayon committee which, at an okrug bureau meeting, decided in absentia, without inviting the kolkhoz members themselves, the future of a bankrupt farm. Although, as far as I remember the mores of the "banqueting era," at least the chairmen were invited to this kind of conference....

Representatives of nongovernmental organizations also gathered here in Washington at the same time as the international conference on coordinating aid to the former Soviet republics. They also discussed ways of helping us in our adversity, but at a private, mainly humanitarian level. Their meeting demonstrated the readiness of ordinary Americans, private business, charitable unions, and religious groups to support Russians, Ukrainians, Kazakhs, Armenians, and residents of other republics during this difficult winter and the coming months. They already seem to have acknowledged their former enemies as friends and partners. And they are selflessly trying to help us.

G-7 Communique, Discussions on CIS Reviewed

LD2601063892 Moscow TASS in English 0623 GMT 26 Jan 92

[By TASS special correspondents Yuriy Kirilchenko and Mikhail Kolesnichenko]

[Text] Garden City, New York, January 26 TASS—The stimulation of the growth of the world economy and the situation in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) were the principal items on the agenda of a regular

meeting of the finance ministers and the directors of central banks of the world's seven leading industrially-developed countries (G7) in Garden City near New York on Saturday [25 January]. The Group of Seven consists of the United States, Canada, Britain, France, Italy, Germany and Japan.

As was also the case at a previous meeting, held in Bangkok in October last year, the economic position of the CIS was an important subject of discussion at the closed-door meeting which continued for more than seven hours.

A final communique issued at the close of the meeting emphasises that participants in the forum discussed the situation in the former Soviet Union as well as reforms effected in some of the independent states recently.

The participants welcomed the fact that the reform process developed peacefully, although they admitted that the transformation of the former Soviet economy would be a difficult and long process, the communique points out.

The process can be successful only if independent states of the former Soviet Union cooperate with one another, maintain a free trade and create effective administrative structures, the document says.

Economic reforms should be elaborated and implemented in close cooperation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the communique notes. Participants in the forum suggested that the IMF act without delay, before spring-time sessions begin, to complete preparations for the necessary procedures to admit those states whose applications are under consideration and who meet membership requirements.

As far as further financial aid to the CIS is concerned, the communique mentions as an important pre-condition the fulfilment by the independent states of their debt obligations to the Group of Seven.

The bulk of the communique deals with various problems of the world economy. Contradictions between individual G-7 countries are a matter of common knowledge. G-7 representatives expressed concern over the fact that economic activity declined since their previous meeting. They agreed to intensify cooperation with a view to enhancing economic growth.

CIS' 'Share' in IMF Determined

LD2601121492 Moscow TASS in English 1137 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] During their meeting in New York, the ministers of finance and directors of the central banks of the world's seven leading industrialised countries (G7) reaffirmed the need to admit former Soviet Republics to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as soon as possible and determined their future share in the IMF's basic capital, the NIHON KEIZAI reports today with reference to international financial quarters.

The G7 representatives agreed in principle that the aggregate share of countries from the former Soviet Union, including the Baltic States, should be about four percent of the IMF's basic capital.

In accordance with the IMF's established practice, this amount is usually adjusted in accordance with the economic and political weight of IMF member-countries and, in its turn, determines the extent of its participation in managing IMF affairs and the possibility to receive credits.

If the above-mentioned share is endorsed, the Commonwealth of Independent States will be the sixth in the IMF hierarchy after Japan which now has 4.69 percent.

Security Council Recommends Republics' Entry

LD2601053192 Moscow TASS in English 0637 GMT 25 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Mikhail Kochetkov]

[Text] United Nations January 25 TASS—Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan were recommended for admission to the United Nations Organisation. This decision was unanimously adopted at Friday's [24 January] meeting of the U.N. Security Council's committee for the admission of new members.

The committee's report is now to be endorsed by the Security Council which is expected to address this issue this week. The final decision will be made by the U.N. General Assembly which resumes its work late in February.

On Thursday [23 January], the Security Council recommended that the general assembly admit Kazakhstan to the U.N.

PRC 'Concerned' Over Taiwanese Visit to CIS

PM2701104992 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 24 Jan 92 p 3

[A. Platkovskiy report and A. Kabannikov report from Beijing under general heading: "What Chang Is Seeking in a Far-Off Country: Visit by Taiwanese Guest Could Result in Diplomatic Scandal with China"]

[Text] Taiwanese Vice Foreign Minister John Chang has arrived to visit Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine. This happened on 20 January, according to world press agency reports, citing official Taiwanese sources. However, there has been to date no confirmation of this high-ranking official's arrival on the territory of the former USSR. There is information that he has been delayed en route and is now awaiting an entry visa in Bangkok.

Meanwhile the situation teeters on the brink of a diplomatic scandal. The PRC Embassy in Moscow is extremely concerned at the Taiwanese representative's intention to visit Commonwealth countries. "If the visit does take place," PRC Embassy Press Attache Yang

Kezhong said in conversation with your correspondent, the most adverse reaction will follow from our side." Beijing's position remains unchanged—any official contacts between Russia or other Commonwealth countries and Taiwan are a gross violation of the principles of relations enshrined in the Soviet-Chinese declaration, which recoignizes that Taiwan is an integral part of China and that the Beijing government is the sole legitimate government.

On New Year's Eve the PRC recognized Russia and the other eleven independent states. Diplomatic relations had earlier been established with the three Baltic states. However, as a Chinese diplomat reported in a confidential conversation, everything achieved during the normalization of Soviet-Chinese relations could now go up in smoke. A readiness to trade official recognition of Taiwan in exchange for a large sum of hard currency is observable in the countries of the Commonwealth, which are suffering economic hardships. "This is an extremely short-sighted policy," the Chinese diplomat added. "Only politicians lacking not only any notion of honesty, but any notion of international affairs as a whole could act in that way, since Taiwan will reunite with the mainland sooner or later."

Taiwan, which—thanks to its economic success—built up the largest currency reserves in the world last year (around $80 billion)—regards pretty confidently the prospects of rapid restoration of diplomatic relations with the former USSR republics.

The diplomacy of the independent states, which is still young and insufficiently experienced in affairs with China, is trying to resolve the equation: "China is one, but Taiwan is a desirable partner." Meanwhile it remains unclear what will happen to the 100,000 tonnes of rice whose delivery in the form of emergency aid to the starving peoples of the former "communist empire" the Taiwanese vice foreign minister intended to discuss in the CIS capitals. [Platkovskiy report ends]

Beijing—John Chang set off for Moscow with a secret wish which, if one is to belive the newspaper CHINA NEWS which is published in Taiwan, consists of acquiring 90 MiG-29 aircraft too beef up the Taiwanese Air Force.

No so long ago, under pressure from Beijing, and mindful of the Chinese proverb which says: "You might get the melon seed but lose the melon," the United States decided not to sell to Taipei the F-16 aircraft which Taipei was asking for.

Japan Opens Diplomatic Ties With 5 States

OW2601233392 Tokyo KYODO in English 2305 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow, Jan. 26 KYODO—Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe exchanged documents with the Ukraine and four other newly independent states Sunday [26 January], immediately establishing diplomatic relations.

Also exchanging documents with Watanabe were representatives of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrghyzia, and Uzbekistan.

The documents call for immediately opening diplomatic ties and the exchange of ambassadors between Japan and the five former Soviet republics, officials said.

In a related development, Japanese officials said Russian President Boris Yeltsin canceled his Monday [27 January] meeting with Watanabe because the Russian leader would be away from Moscow.

Watanabe will confer with Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev on Monday, as scheduled. Aides said Watanabe will urge him to facilitate an early visit to Japan by Yeltsin and Kozyrev.

A dispute over four Russian-held islands off Japan's northernmost island of Hokkaido has barred Japan and Russia from concluding a peace treaty.

Japan recognized member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in December and the five countries subsequently notified Japan that they will honor their respective treaty obligations that they inherited from the former Soviet Union.

The five newly independent states also agreed to comply with Japanese requests for bringing nuclear weapons under a unified command and for honoring human rights, the officials said.

Japanese officials said Japan will also proceed to establish diplomatic relations with Moldova and other CIS member countries but it will take a wait-and-see attitude toward opening ties with Georgia which is in the middle of an internal conflict.

Watanabe will also meet the foreign ministers of Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia during his stay in Moscow to attend Middle East peace talks scheduled to begin Tuesday [28 January], his aides said.

Yeltsin will not be attending the talks, however, the aides said.

Armed Units To Leave Poland by Nov 1992

LD2601200892 Moscow TASS in English 1844 GMT 26 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Igor Galkin]

[Text] Legnitsa, January 26 TASS—All armed units of the Commonwealth will leave the Polish territory before mid-November 1992, General Colonel Viktor Dubynin, the commander of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] Northern Group of Troops told a news conference here.

Since early 1989, when the Soviet troops began to withdraw from Poland, already 23,000 soldiers and officers left the country with about 400 tanks, over 200 armoured carriers and other military machines.

Dubynin considers an active work on withdrawing the CIS troops from Poland at the time when the talks on the issue have not yet ended and the appropriate agreement has not yet signed, an indicator of the aspiration of the Commonwealth countries to develop good-neighbourly relations with Poland. He noted with regret that the Polish side is delaying the signing of a protocol on economic and material settlements connected with the troops withdrawal. The units withdrawn left in Poland over 700 objects built by them. The talks on the preparation of a treaty on the troops withdrawal are being delayed.

Irrespective of the results of the talks, the military troops will leave the Polish territory by the scheduled time. All the units are coming to the Russian territory. Regular military men who would wish to continue their service in the armed forces of other Commonwealth countries will have such a possibility, Dubynin pointed out.

CPSU Archives Slated for Publication in UK

LD2401001892 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 2300 GMT 23 Jan 92

[Excerpts] Foreign news agencies have reported that for the first time documents from top secret CPSU archives will be published in Great Britain. Aleksandr Malikov, our correspondent in Great Britain, gives the details.

[Malikov] [passage omitted] There is no doubt that selling confidential documents from the party archives will bring a certain financial profit. But at the same time there is a danger in selling one's own history left and right. For example, I have not heard that even one page from the archive of the royal family in England has gone abroad for hard currency or that confidential British intelligence services files have been sold to producers of hits in Hollywood.

In addition to British historians who have a purely scientific interest in the CPSU archives, dealers who make good money on the history of all peoples at all times might get their hands on the copied documents. Surely, they will manage to make twice as much money than our archives and library services selling the documents to the British publishing house of Chadwick-Healey.

Britain To Pay Baltics for Confiscated Gold

PM2701111192 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 23 Jan 92 p 3

[Unattributed item from the "In A Few Lines" roundup]

[Text] Britain has decided to give the Baltic republics 90 million pounds sterling (around $160 million) in compensation for gold kept in the Bank of England. Prime Minister John Major announced this after 30 minutes of talks with Lithuanian Supreme Council Chairman Vytautas Landsbergis. It is known that the gold was in the bank when Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1940. Despite the USSR's claims, Britain confiscated it during World War II. There were 4.48 tonnes of gold belonging to Estonia, 6.58 tonnes belonging to Latvia, and 2.96 tonnes belonging to Lithuania.

African Attitudes to Events in CIS Pondered

PM2401152592 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 18 Jan 92 p 4

[Correspondent Igor Tarutin "View from Harare" article: "Why Is the Flagstaff Without a Flag"]

[Text] The tall flagstaff in the grounds of the former Soviet Embassy in Harare—now the official diplomatic mission of the Russian Federation—no longer flies a flag. The red hammer and sickle has been taken down, but the white, blue, and red tricolor cannot be raised. Zimbabwe still has not recognized Russia, although enough time has passed since the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] was formed. Is this an unintentional delay caused by local bureaucratic protocol or a deliberate gesture?

The breakup of the USSR and the appearance of the CIS were greeted with mixed feelings in Africa. The range of these feelings is quite broad: from indifference to what is happening in our declining state to genuine concern and a desire to determine the essence and causes of events in our country. However, the predominant reaction is bitterness.

It is understandable when states of so-called socialist orientation react so badly. Admittedly, this orientation has now been abandoned, although we were very closely associated with its followers until quite recently. One way or another, these regimes have lost their patron. However, there are only two such regimes left in Africa: Angola and Mozambique. The Ethiopian regime has collapsed. Several others have carried out reforms and totally abandoned the old ideology.

Moreover, our aid to these countries—serving as the basis of friendship—has rapidly declined in recent years, shrinking like the wild ass' skin before our very eyes. Admittedly, even in the past we were not very generous because of our own poverty. Although it goes without saying that we always managed to find something for our African friends. Generally speaking, our mutual relations were based on military supplies. But even they were gradually scaled down.

This process began quite some time ago. Consequently, the collapse of the Soviet Union possibly came as no great surprise to our closest partners. They had been acutely aware of our diminishing potential and influence for some time.

Another group of countries was less prepared, in my opinion. I am referring to the African governments committed to an anti-imperialist policy which had formed a bloc with us in international affairs alone. Relations with them were outwardly warm. They needed us to counterbalance the West, allowing them to maneuver and play on contradictions. Some were impressed by our "achievements": the great power of our party bureaucracy, our tough administrative control over the economy and all spheres of life, and our suppression of dissidents.

But there is no doubt that the most important point was the foreign policy aspect and the confident belief of various African governments that, if needed, Moscow would definitely step into the international arena on the Dark Continent's behalf in any conflict it may have with the West. In this respect, the first alarm sounded when war broke out in the Persian Gulf. The Africans saw that the Soviet Union had turned its back on Iraq and supported the coalition opposing it. Even countries in the developing world which had no particular sympathy for Baghdad were depressed by its rapid, ignominious defeat with a display of U.S. might. Everyone obviously began to consider their own position at that moment. Clearly, there would be no one to intercede if a conflict should arise.

This was possibly the point at which Africa's attitude toward us began to cool. Zimbabwe had usually tried to avoid direct criticism of the USSR. Then suddenly it began making negative statements about us—rarely at first, but then increasingly often. The attacks became more and more painful. After M.S. Gorbachev resigned, a rather tendentious feature was shown on local television, which ended with the question: Is he a national hero or an international traitor?

But confusion lies behind the attacks, which admittedly are sometimes offensive and tactless. After all, many have seen the platform on which they stood collapse beneath their feet. The concept of nonalignment, which served as a guideline for a whole number of states, has lost its substance. The old system of coordinates has collapsed, and it is not clear where they should look for support now.

A whole cohort of leaders who have gained capital by denouncing nameless neocolonialism and imperialism, and consequently looked good in their own eyes and the eyes of their people, are now being forced to change their tune. They feel they have been thrown before the United States, which is now dictating its will. The West has noticeably ceased to stand on ceremony in Africa and is making tough political demands in exchange for aid.

Even rabid anticommunist regimes have suffered. They have rapidly lost their attractiveness as bastions repelling the "red threat." Their former patrons have turned their backs on them. Zaire is a typical example. Its President Mobutu Sese Seko is desperately struggling to hold on to power in the face of national outrage. In the past, French or Belgian paratroops would simply land in Kinshasa and, to the president's joy, rapidly instill order. Consequently, even those who have never felt any particular liking for the Soviet Union have reason to mourn its loss.

One way or another, the king is dead. Long live the king? As successor to the USSR, what role will Russia play in Africa? Will it play any role at all? It does not appear to have found its place yet. Russian politicians are focusing on the West. We are trying to convey our concerns and vision of the future primarily to the United States, Europe, and Japan. However, if we want to be a power—albeit no longer a great power—we need a global approach and contacts in all regions of the world—including Africa, of course.

It goes without saying that there will have to be a sober assessment of the past, although not everything was as bad as all that. We will also need a new, considered policy based on our own reality and international realities. But before drawing up any definite concepts, which will take time, we must honestly and intelligently explain to the Africans what exactly has happened in our country and what kind of relationship we would like to have with them.

There is certainly no need to hastily organize a visit by President B.N. Yeltsin to the Dark Continent for this purpose. Everyone realizes that we have different priorities at the moment. But why not send a high-ranking diplomat from Moscow as a special envoy? This has been the practice at difficult times in the past and one which, I believe, is perfectly sensible.

For the moment, alas, we are clearly misunderstood. The bare flagstaffs of Russian embassies in Africa are a symptom of this.

Commonwealth

Conference of Supreme Soviet Leaders Begins

Agenda Discussed

PM2401151692 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Jan 92 First Edition p 1

[Report by the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Press Center: "The Future Belongs to Cooperation"]

[Text] A conference of leaders of parliaments of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] member states opened in Minsk 24 January.

As S. Filatov, first deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet, announced at a press briefing that a draft agreement on cooperation between parliamentarians of the CIS countries in the sphere of lawmaking and application of the law is being discussed at the conference. Because the CIS Councils of Heads of State and Heads of Government already have been set up, the formation of an analogous structure for interparliamentary cooperation is urgent. The Russian delegation supports the idea of a parliamentary assembly of the CIS countries.

S. Filatov mentioned among possible areas of joint activity questions of legislative activity, human rights, the development of interstate relations, economic reform, immigration and emigration policy, national security, the power industry (especially nuclear power), transport, communications, ecology, and the fight against organized crime. The vice speaker of the Russian parliament stressed the need to set up an interparliamentary information and reference service which would link all the CIS countries' parliaments in an electronic system.

S. Filatov noted the Russian delegation's willingness to examine at the Minsk conference the question of the form of work on amendments submitted in the course of the process of ratification of the Agreement on the Creation of the CIS in the parliaments of the sovereign states.

"Experience shows that cooperation solely at the level of bilateral agreements will not work," S. Filatov stated. "Life demands multilateral coordination of the activity of legislative bodies."

Commissions Created

LD2401160792 Moscow TASS in English 1524 GMT 24 Jan 92

[By Belta-TASS correspondent Vladimir Glod]

[Text] Minsk January 24 (TASS)—The parliamentary speakers of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) will be meeting not less than two times a year, according to the regulations worked out in Minsk on Friday [24 January] at an interparliamentary CIS meeting. The parliamentary representatives of 10 CIS members are taking part in the meeting. No reasons were given for the absence of Uzbekistan.

The parliamentary speakers will discuss interparliamentary cooperation, interstate relations and legislative policy in the sphere of joint actions. The capitals of the Commonwealth states will, in turn, host the meetings.

An agreement on interparliamentary commissions was also adopted on Friday. The temporary commissions are to be created to solve the issues of joint activities. They are to be formed on an equal basis and will meet if necessary.

It was recommended to form legislative, human rights and interstate relations commissions. The Russian delegation suggested to form a CIS parliamentary assembly, but Ukraine and Belarus opposed, saying "the idea is not yet ripe enough". Still the two Slavic republics agreed such a commission can be instituted in the future.

Cooperation Document Adopted

LD2501181992 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1628 GMT 25 Jan 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Deputy chairmen of Supreme Soviets [SS] of CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] member states signed a protocol on cooperation of parliaments during their Minsk January 24 meeting. As was communicated on January 25 to journalists by first deputy chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet Sergey Filatov, a move was made at the meeting to set up a council of Supreme Soviets chairmen from CIS member countries to coordinate activities of parliamentary commissions in several directions: in the spheres of economy, law, migration policies, interstate relations, ecology, crime combat, power industries. The protocol signed points out the interest on the part of parliaments in setting up the parliamentary assembly. This suggestion is expected to be considered by Supreme Soviets of CIS member countries.

Filatov also told about the agreement reached in the question of exchange of legislative acts, of establishing telecommunications among parliaments, of introducing arbitration chamber to handle disputable issues, of preparing agreement on guarantees of civil rights (in spheres of labor, housing, retirement and other relations). The parties also signed an agreement on interparliamentary cooperation in intergovernmental sphere.

In Minsk there was no consideration of issues related to the introduction by individual republics of own currencies. According to Filatov, there was reached an agreement with Ukrainian representatives pertaining to indispensability of creating a joint commission of Ukrainian and Russian parliaments to look into the question of the Crimea.

According to Filatov's account, the Minsk meeting was not attended by the first deputy chairman of the

Moldova Supreme Soviet due to the illness of the Moldova Supreme Soviet chairman, and the first deputy chairman of the Uzbek Supreme Soviet due to the tense interior situation in the republic.

The meeting of the SS chairmen of CIS member countries is expected to take place at the end of February and to be the venue for signing documents on interparliamentary cooperation.

Meeting on Assets Abroad

LD2501184192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1530 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] Minsk, 25 Jan (BELTA-TASS)—The CIS' [Commonwealth of Independent States] interstate commission tasked with drafting the criteria and principles for the division of the former USSR's assets abroad is convening today in Minsk, the capital of Belarus. Representatives from nine CIS member states are in attendance; Moldova and Uzbekistan are absent, for unknown reasons.

It was unanimously decided that Belarus Foreign Minister Petr Kravchenko should preside over the first meeting. Kravchenko told BELTA-TASS that the session is in compliance with a ruling by the heads of the CIS states dated 30 December on assets abroad. The meeting is considering two important aspects of this issue. First, using information from the Russian Foreign Ministry, it will try to ascertain exactly what is at the disposal of the CIS abroad and what is to be divided. He added that such information will be provisional. Instructions to draw up inventories have been telegrammed to Soviet establishments abroad, but the answers will probably not be received until 10 February, the day before the next CIS head of states' summit.

The second and possibly most difficult aspect of the commission's work is how to define the criteria according to which these assets will be distributed as per the heads of states' ruling. The Belarus delegation, Kravchenko added, is against infringement upon the national interests of any of the states. Each republic should receive a portion of the assets that is equitable and in keeping with its economic potential, political importance in the world, and contribution made by it to the USSR's coffers.

Valeriy Nikolayenko, deputy foreign minister of the Russian Federation, believes that the property of establishments abroad is of varying origin and nature and cannot be divided up pro rata according to a formula, especially in regard to the embassies and consulates. Even that would be impossible in some regions due to the laws of the countries in which they are located. In his view, a more feasible way of solving the problem would be joint use by the Commonwealth states of buildings, plots of land, and other assets proportionate to the share thereof that each would receive. To determine each share, the same criteria for apportionment of the foreign debt could be imaginatively applied. Of course, account would have to be taken of national income, import and export volumes, labor productivity, and other factors.

The majority of conferees believe that the meeting will not succeed in adopting a final document today. It will gradually emerge. Several more meetings and lively discussions could well take place.

Postponement of Commonwealth Summit Appraised

LD2701120592 Moscow TASS in English 1126 GMT 27 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Lyudmila Yermakova]

[Text] Moscow January 27 TASS— The Commonwealth summit, planned for late January, did not take place either in Minsk, or Moscow. "I think it is a matter of time, rather than any serious differences," Vladimir Pokrovskiy, first deputy chairman of the Russian Committee on Economic Cooperation with Commonwealth Member-States, told TASS.

Time is needed to study materials, prepared for the summit, he said, adding that experts from Commonwealth states should meet to discuss the summit first. Experts have been invited to come to Moscow this week, but no one knows for sure if they will come.

Russian government experts have already submitted a package of documents, officials said.

The sides have already signed an agreement on economic issues, setting a 50 per cent profitability limit for producers—a measure aimed at containing spiralling prices.

Heads of government have been asked to meet in February to discuss free transit and lifting of quotas and licenses for certain products.

Attempts to transform the former Union into a new commonwealth have resulted in several contradictions, which can only be resolved through economic reforms and a mechanism designed to cement the Commonwealth, according to the government.

Such a mechanism is not yet in place and, its development is proceeding at a slow pace. Washington recently asked Commonwealth members to agree on individual quotas for U.S. meat, delivered against credits granted to the former Soviet Union.

Member-states have adopted provisional regulations for a working group that will prepare and hold meetings of the Council of Heads of State and Government. The working group should submit the provisional agenda of a meeting and documents, prepared by republics, to participants at least two weeks in advance.

Republican parliaments are also trying to put the Commonwealth's house in order. Last week they held an inter-parliamentary meeting in Minsk, agreeing to hold councils of parliament chairmen from Commonwealth

member-states. They will meet at least twice a year to discuss inter-parliamentary cooperation and interstate relations.

"It is necessary to find a solution, acceptable for the sides in a situation when the laws of one state differ from laws of the another one," Deputy Belarussian Parliament Chairman Vasiliy Sholodonov said.

Working meetings of heads of parliament will be held in the capitals of Commonwealth member-states on a rotation basis. Russians have suggested to set up a Commonwealth parliament assembly along the lines of the Europarliament. The new body could cement the Commonwealth of Independent States, they said.

Baltics

Assembly Gathers for First Plenary Session

Agenda To Be Adopted

OW2401165692 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1435 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] [No dateline as received] On January 24 (12:00, Moscow time) the Baltic Assembly gathered for its first plenary meeting in Riga. It is attended by an Estonian delegation led by the parliament's speaker Julo Nugis and a Lithuanian one led by deputy head of parliament Bronislavas Kuzmicka. Among the participants are also MPs [members of parliament] from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Germany and Poland, and deputies to the Europarliament and the Northern Council.

During the first day, the Assembly's working body will be set up and agenda adopted. Subsequently, work will continue in the committees.

On January 25, the delegates to the Baltic Assembly will meet with representatives of Russia's North-Western military group.

Troop Withdrawal Discussed

LD2501175892 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1430 GMT 25 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Galina Kuchina]

[Text] Riga, 25 Jan (TASS)—Within the framework of the work taking place here at the first session of the interparliamentary Baltic Assembly, a meeting with the command of the Armed Forces of the former Soviet Union situated on Baltic territory took place today. The meeting's participants laid out their positions and indicated the problems connected with the withdrawal of the Army from Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

At the request of a TASS correspondent, Vladimir Lopatin, deputy chairman of the Russian state committee on defense issues, commented on the exchange of opinions that took place. He noted that the sides talked about troops under Russian jurisdiction. The Russian president made a statement on this on 17 January. Yesterday the Russian parliament confirmed the financing of the troops situated outside the Commonwealth of Independent States. The publication of a presidential decree to this effect is expected soon. Russia has jurisdiction over military property, both mobile and fixed. The unilateral decision by the Baltic states on the nationalization of parts of army property may, in the view of Lopatin, worsen the situation. These issues should be discussed at the interstate level. In regard to reports in the foreign press that the naval base in Latvia is selling submarines to third countries, Lopatin says that not a single military unit or base has the right to sell these.

No one is arguing with the necessity of withdrawing Army units from the Baltics, Vladimir Lopatin continued. The timeframe and schedule, bearing in mind the sad experience of the withdrawal of troops from Eastern Europe, will depend on the preparations for the social basis and certain guarantees for servicemen and their families. The creation of such guarantees requires the efforts of Russia and of other states interested in the withdrawal of the Army.

In conclusion, Vladimir Lopatin stressed that the decisions of the Baltic Assembly on this issue will be recommendations and will be useful at the official talks between the Russian delegation and delegations of the three Baltic countries. Such talks will begin next week.

News Conference Held

LD2501204792 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1835 GMT 25 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Galina Kuchina]

[Text] Riga, 25 Jan (TASS)—The points of view of the representative of Russia and the representatives of the delegations of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia differ on a number of points. This was revealed at a news conference held after the meeting of Baltic Assembly participants with the command of the Armed Forces of the former Union in regard to troops stationed in the Baltic republics. The Baltic states are united that a political solution on the troop withdrawal must not be dependent on social conditions. In their opinion, the intention to demobilize 367 units on Baltic territory, affecting the demographic situation, is debatable. The view of the three republics is that the Army subunits must first be withdrawn and then demobilized.

The republics envision their participation in the European system of collective security in the absence of foreign troops on their territory.

The Russian representative admitted the possibility of keeping a proportion of troops strategically designated to ensure pan-European security.

Interview With Latvian Official

LD2601042392 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1600 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] A news conference has just ended at the Supreme Council. (?Indre) Toome, Romualds Ozols, Mihails Stepicevs, and Russian representative Vladimir Lopatin, participants in the Baltic Assembly, met with journalists. The subject of the discussion was the status of the former Soviet Army in the Baltics. After the news conference correspondent Baiba Saberte and Mihails Stepicevs, secretary of the Commission for Defense and Internal Affairs of the Supreme Council of Latvia, had a talk.

[Begin recording] [Saberte] The problem of the Army. The problem of the former Soviet Army, because a new master has risen for this former Soviet Army—Russia.

[Stepicevs] It must be said that the position of Mr. Lopatin was clear. This is the present position of the Russians, who would, after all, like to preserve their influence, let us say, the military influence, the political influence, in this region. This can be seen clearly, and nobody concealed this from them.

At the same time the main point is that Russia would like to first discuss resolving social problems and then the withdrawal of the Army. Our categorical position is as follows: the withdrawal of the Army, and resolving the social problems in the course of the withdrawal. And resolving the problems not at our expense; they could be resolved, of course, at the expense of Russia, with the help of the Western countries, probably, ready to assist with their means.

We might be able to actively collaborate with these countries should our initiative be necessary there. But we are not able to invest materially in any way; we simply have nothing to invest, and we do not owe anything to anybody. These questions were unequivocally explained to Lopatin. He understands partially, but this stance—regarding the resolution of the economic and social problems first—he would like to maintain these positions, but it appears to me that there is no realistic basis there. This social aspect has been taken out of our adopted appeal to the president and parliament of Russia. We are not taking on any commitments in this, and we do not connect this problem of withdrawal with the social problem.

[Saberte] Mr. Lopatin—not without reason—did not want to even mention the term occupation army, because that would immediately involve another status, different responsibilities and obligations.

[Stepicevs] I think this word occupation would not be the main thing today. If we started with this problem, it would be prolonged by determining the status of occupation. Then we would have to draw up an entirely different withdrawal plan. If possible, I think that if we are able to withdraw by a shorter way, let us proceed along this shorter way with whatever status we would now assign to these troops. It is important that they be ready to leave. We must now proceed to that; we must not lose a single day because the situation in Russia is so unstable that we do not know what will happen tomorrow, never mind a month later.

If Russia is ready to start these talks, as early as this week, commissions can be set up to work on these problems. The talks will be very difficult—I already feel this now—because Russia has worked out a certain stance. Well, our positon quite surely will not be in harmony with that position. But there should not be any kind of hesitation, starting discussions about some kind of status, about what has happened and what has not; the whole world knows what has happened, we know what has happened, they know as well, so let us not waste time on what we might lose. We must not lose another day; we must begin to act. And our goal, understand, for Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia there is but one goal: withdrawal.

The question: What to take and what to leave here. This question is a separate question for each state. Lithuania is ready to give back everything to the army of Russia, and to remain as it stands, it is the stance of [words indistinct]. Our stance is to keep the immovable property; this is our property. Estonia went further than that—not giving away anything at all, even not to allow [word indistinct] to be taken away. This is an internal matter for each state, and it will be dealt with in talks.

[Saberte] Yes, but during these talks won't the withdrawal of the Army be dragged out to eternity? Russia says that the primary matter is the creation of social guarantees. Until the economy—in its present situation—is able to create social guarantees (?in Russia) for all these troops, it is simply not realistic to talk about, let us say, the shortest time, as was stated today by Romualds Ozols [words indistinct].

[Stepicevs] You understand that this is the position of Russia, their position today. It may change tomorrow. It may change only if we express our categorical stance and prove our position. This is why talks are required. There must be talks; there must be discussions about which state tries to take more with it and leave less behind. Our job is to not give up what belongs to us.

The talks will be led by Mr. Dinevics from the Supreme Council. There will be (?a couple of) deputies and a group of experts from the government. Latvia's position is unequivocal. It is clear in our minds. [end recording]

You have just heard a conversation with Mihails Stepicevs, secretary of the Commission for Defense and Internal Affairs and a participant in the Baltic Assembly.

Meet With Army Group

LD2601160892 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in English 2230 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] The first session of the Baltic countries' interparliamentary assembly continued its work in Riga for the second day.

Today the Lithuanian, Latvian, and, Estonian MPs [members of parliament] held a meeting behind closed doors with the leadership of Russia's North Western Army Grouping, which has its headquarters in Riga. Both the chief of the Army Grouping, General Valeriy Mironov, and the MPs who took part in the meeting are reported to have assessed it positively. MP Romualdas Ozolas pointed out that they had received answers to three main questions: Russia stated clearly that it was in charge of the troops as the successor of the former Soviet Union. It agreed unconditionally to the wording that the troops were to be pulled out and talks were to be held shortly. If after then no unexpected events which could interfere with the start of the talks occur I think they will set off well, said Romualdas Ozolas.

The participants in the session of the Baltic Assembly today also had a meeting with a delegation of the Nordic Council.

Appeal to Yeltsin

LD2601174992 Moscow TASS in English 1644 GMT 26 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondents Galina Kuchina and Valeriy Zaytsev]

[Text] Riga January 26 TASS—The first plenary session of the Baltic Assembly ended its work today in Riga. The assembly is an inter-parliamentarian body of the independent Baltic states.

Participants made an appeal to Russian President Boris Yeltsin and the parliament of the Russian Federation to move out the troops, which are under command of the Russian government, deployed in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. According to the document, the Baltic assembly hopes that during the negotiations, scheduled for January 28-29, the sides will determine shortened terms and schedule for the complete withdrawal of the Russian troops from the Baltic territory, and that the withdrawal will begin immediately.

In the final document the assembly recommended Baltic parliaments and governments to discuss a draft interstate agreement to create a legal basis for cooperation and development of the national economy, and work out basic principles for the creation of the Baltic market, integrating step by step into the European economic structures.

The assembly approbated recommendations for restoring the legal bureau of the Baltic states and other documents.

The next Baltic Assembly meeting is scheduled for July, to be held in Lithuania.

Military

Provisional Results of Ukraine Meeting Cited

LD2401231292 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1945 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Interview with Colonel General Boris Yevgenyevich Pyankov, deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States, by unidentified correspondent, place and date not given; from the "Ukraine at the Focus of Attention" program—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] The division of forces in Ukraine is at the focus of attention throughout the world. Having signed an agreement in Minsk, Leonid Kravchuk is running counter to it in attempting to transfer to Ukrainian jurisdiction not only the whole Black Sea Fleet, but the Air Force, too—not to mention land troops. Experts from Ukraine and the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] are meeting for the fourth time in the last two weeks. How the division of forces is resolved will be shown by the meeting at government level, but here are the provisional results of the expert meeting.

[Pyankov] As previously, the stumbling block was the problem of the Black Sea Fleet. I will say here that unfortunately, the Ukrainian experts have a totally incorrect interpretation of the tasks of the Fleet, and as a result of its subordination. In trying to explain that ships not carrying nuclear weapons cannot be strategic forces, they are leading public opinion astray. The Black Sea Fleet as such, in itself, is a strategic amalgamation, for it can deal with the job—has to deal with the job—of protecting the Black Sea straits. It has to deal with the job in the Mediterranean Sea—to put it mildly—of localizing the actions of, for example, the U.S. 6th Fleet, the 5th and 6th Combined Tactical Aviation Commands, and other groupings. It also has to deal with jobs in the world's oceans. Our position is this: In order to carry out the tasks which Ukraine is planning—protecting the coastline, the littoral zone, and so on—it needs a specific fleet. The Soviet Union's [as heard] naval command is allocating such forces, and is even prepared to reinforce them. But at the same time we have a clear understanding that the Black Sea Fleet has to remain part of the Navy of, as we say now, the CIS.

The second problem that is linked with this is the airborne assault division. It is the only one in Ukraine, and under an article in the first agreement it is to be included in the strategic forces, remain there for the period until the elimination of nuclear weapons, and then, together with the strategic forces, it should cease to exist—either by being withdrawn to Russia or, perhaps, by being subsequently transferred to Ukraine's armed forces. In any case it will cease to exist at the same time as the strategic forces in Ukraine as a whole.

The third difficult problem is the military transport aviation, which was created and exists in order to be used together with the airborne assault forces, strategic

and operational, because the division in itself cannot do its job as an assault force without transport aviation. Unfortunately, our structures are built in such a way that, in order to dispatch a single airborne assault division, practically five or six military transporters are needed. There were sensible proposals on this, but the experts on the Ukrainian side have not as yet responded to these proposals at all.

All of the other issues have, by and large, been agreed upon, and have found mutual understanding. So the experts of Ukraine—and as I understand it, they are, of course, acting on the instructions of the government—are seizing—I'd put it in such terms—seizing all of the military sanatoria belonging to the Ministry of Defense on the territory of Ukraine. There are 29 of them. It is traditionally a warm area, and with the sea: places where sanatoria were set up. The greatest majority of sanatoria are there. I am not sure if they will now become the property of Ukraine; in the light of how events are currently developing, I am not sure that the servicemen of the CIS Armed Forces will be able to use the sanatoria and resort facilities there tomorrow as freely as at present.

in effect, out of more than 100 depots with their supplies, all are being transferred to Ukrainian ownership. They are taking a hard line on this, although we are demanding that a proportion of the supplies, primarily the supplies of the center, remain at the disposal of the General Staff, and that a proportion of the depots also remain. It's just that we need depots to supply that group of strategic forces which remains in Ukraine. I don't understand why the Ukrainian experts have taken a hard line, a line in the form of an ultimatum. We say—how can we supply the nearly 180,000-strong grouping of strategic forces? We have to dispatch an immense quantity of food, stores, and other types of stocks, fuel, and lubricants; they have to be concentrated somewhere, and then supplied to the units.

At the same time I would like to express the following thought as well. At the last meeting of the governmental commission, a communique was published into which an absolutely clear point was written: The parties will refrain from any unilateral actions. Unfortunately, we have to state that the Ukrainian party has violated this agreement, and throughout the whole of this week there has been powerful pressure on the Armed Forces on the territory of Ukraine, pressure connected with their being called on to take an oath, despite there being an agreement that no one will be brought to oath, either Ukrainian or Russian—to any oath for the strategic troops—until there is a complete definition of who is whom, and on what will happen to fixed-contract servicemen, soldiers, and sergeants called up in Ukraine and today serving in Russia.

Right. Today a process has begun of mass departure by these servicemen from military units. A proposal on this issue has been formulated absolutely clearly: These servicemen must continue service in the military units where they are serving, and the question of their transfer to the Ukrainian army must be decided systematically, according to agreement, and on a case by case basis.

[Correspondent] Tell me, please: Approximately what percentage of servicemen have already taken an oath to Kravchuk?

[Pyankov] Today it is difficult to answer this with a figure, because the Ukrainian side is trying to exaggerate it considerably. According to information we have, it is considerably less, but we clearly know that the sailors of the Black Sea Fleet firmly maintain the position that until there is a political solution to this problem they will not take any other oaths. They are maintaining their loyalty to their military duty and their previously adopted oath. The Ukrainian oath is being taken by young recruits.

[Correspondent] When is the elimination of nuclear weapons on Ukrainian territory planned?

[Pyankov] For the time being, according to the treaty, elimination should take place on the whole in 1994, but with part a little later, although Ukraine is insisting on eliminating tactical nuclear weapons by mid-1992, and completing strategic nuclear weapons in 1994. I must say that this is an exceptionally difficult problem. A huge amount of weapons has been amassed. It will be a lot of work, entailing large outlays.

[Correspondent] What is the situation with regard to ground troops?

[Pyankov] The problem, as they say, is clearer with ground troops. Three districts, seven motorized infantry, tank, and artillery divisions, and units of branches of troops—engineering, chemical, communications, and so on—will be transferred to Ukraine's armed forces. This is a very large grouping. Even without the strategic forces of the strength proposed, including the Navy, it will number approximately 450,000 men. The question arises: What is such a grouping necessary for? We had a conversation in answer to my directly formulated question: Why does sovereign Ukraine need such a grouping? The foreign minister said that the question was an improper one. I said: Why does asking why Ukraine needs an army seem to be improper? I said no, the question is not why Ukraine needs an army; the question is why Ukraine needs a large army.

The attempt to explain this question—that there will be reductions—needs more reflection: how these reductions will be made, as the process of reduction itself is a complicated problem; how it will begin; who will be cut. This problem needs to be attentively analyzed.

[Correspondent] Let's return to the Air Force. How much, approximately, will go to Ukraine?

[Pyankov] The air forces of three military districts will go to the Ukraine. They are insisting on the transfer of a further air force, let's say the reserves of the supreme command, and that makes four forces. The all-Army

aviation, in other words helicopter aviation, is a very large grouping. This is considerably more than has been allocated to districts on the territory of Ukraine by the earlier agreed upon quota of common weapons. It is a very large grouping. I think that the issue must be resolved sensibly and politically, and after this some kind of division will take place. Forces will be allocated for the creation of a Ukrainian fleet. This has been determined. A Black Sea Fleet will exist, and here it is necessary that both parties approach the issue with the absolute understanding of what the Black Sea Fleet is, of its traditions, its role today. Then we will find the correct path to resolving this problem.

Baltic Fleet Oath Question Still Major Issue

'Deferred Indefinitely'

LD2501104292 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0845 GMT 25 Jan 92

[From the "Panorama" program]

[Text] [Unidentified announcer] We have news from the Black Sea Fleet. Vladimir Plotnikov, our correspondent in Sevastopol is on the line. We are listening.

[Plotnikov] Good day!

[Announcer] Good day!

[Plotnikov] The news is that today the Black Sea sailors will not take the oath. Why have I rung? Well, in order to tell you of this. Because the day before, as recently as yesterday and even this morning, there was not only talk, but there were even preparations for taking the oath. Even specifying the hour, more correctly, the training detachment where this would take place. A formal procedure had even been worked out.

Well, half an hour ago Vice Admiral Georgiy Nikolayevich Gurinov, chief of staff of the Black Sea Fleet, told me that there would be no taking of the oath and that the question is being deferred indefinitely.

Probably this is now the most sensible thing to do because, you know that the fate of the Fleet has not yet been decided. It is possible that a proportion of the ships will nevertheless go to the Ukraine—it is then that the question of taking the oath can be raised, the more so as three texts of the oath exist: to the CIS [Commonwealth of Indpendent States], Russia, and the Ukraine. Which one is to be chosen is a personal matter, not only for the newly arrived recruits from the last call up, but also for the officers and the warrant officers. Well, and the sailors of earlier call ups will serve, evidently, until demobilization, under the old oath.

Rumors that Black Sea sailors are already taking an oath of allegiance to the Ukraine and to the Ukrainian people probably stem from the fact that some two weeks ago an oath was taken by personnel of Commander Alferyev's combined unit. But these are border guards and not part of the Navy. By the way, in this combined unit, only 52 percent of the border guards took the Ukrainian oath.

Well, and as far as the Fleet itself is concerned, everything remains unchanged for the time being.

[Announcer] Well, are experts of Ukraine and CIS now continuing work there?

[Plotnikov] The work of the experts is under way and, at this very moment, a news conference is taking place with Admiral Kasatonov, commander of the Fleet. I think that we may be able to bring you some news, but it is already quite definite that today there will be no oath.

[Announcer] Thank you for the news.

Conflicting Report

LD2701124392 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Text] The independent Ukrainian agency RESPUBLIKA reports that Admiral Chernavin, commander in chief of the Navy of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States], has arrived in Sevastopol. He held a conference with the Fleet's military council and, a few hours after his arrival at the Black Sea Fleet, military units received an order to immediately swear the oath of allegiance to the CIS which had been postponed previously. The same agency reports that men of the crews of ships guarding the Black Sea Fleet maritime area swore an oath of allegiance to Ukraine.

Recruits Take New Oath of Allegiance 26 Jan

LD2601070392 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0600 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] In accordance with the military oath agreement for general purpose forces signed by the republics of Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and the Russian Federation, recruits in the 1991 autumn call-up will begin to take the oath of allegiance as of today. The young servicemen represent more than 30 nationalities. According to the text of the oath, they will all swear loyalty to the people of the country in which they are citizens. They will also take it upon themselves to piously adhere to the Constitution and the laws of both their own state and the state on the territory of which they are fulfilling their military duties.

Navy Combat Training Considerably Changed

PM2701114192 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 24 Jan 92 p 1

[Report by Captain Third Class V. Maryukha: "Ships Are In Their Bases. But Only Until Course Tasks Are Performed"]

[Text] KRASNAYA ZVEZDA has already reported that the Navy's combat training is undergoing considerable changes this year. However, the attempts to divide the Fleet on the basis of each Commonwealth state's share

[dolya] and the reports from various news agencies that ships are not leaving their bases and that they will soon be joined by ships presently at sea have caused doubts: Are sailors interested in combat training now?

"Recent reports that the Navy has stopped combat training and that ships are in their bases and basing stations because of the lack of fuel are only partly true," Vice Admiral A. Kuzmin, Navy chief of Combat Training, told me in conversation. "The Fleet's quotas for fuel and lubricants in 1992 have been cut by an average of 60 percent. This is bound to affect the number of sea voyages. But the ships are in their bases for other reasons. The Fleet is now carrying out course tasks and preparing to accept a new intake of recruits and, of course, there are considerably fewer ships on combat duty now than at any other time in the training year. The precise number is to some extent a military secret and the figure in the newspaper cannot give a specific idea of sailors' intense workload. This year we are placing the main emphasis on base training and are using simulators to train not only individual weapon crews and combat posts but whole crews and ship formations. Individual sea voyages have been systematically [planovo] reduced. Ships will perform tasks only within groups and formations, which will make it possible to considerably reduce expenditure on combat training and reduce engine wear."

"The Navy is carrying out its activity in accordance with the plans for the use of forces and in the light of the existing operational situation. Tasks to protect the sea borders are being carried out in full," Rear Admiral I. Semenov, deputy chief of the the Navy's Operational Directorate, stressed during the conversation. "There has been some reduction in the number of surface craft stationed in remote areas in view of the favorable international situation and the need to cut engine wear, as well as the nature of combat training at the beginning of the training year. Submarines are at sea mainly in accordance with prearranged plans."

The relatively low percentage of ships putting to sea, my interlocutors told me, will be maintained at least until the end of the week. Last year each training year began that way, too, but this caused no one any concerns or doubts about the continuation of combat training. It is a different matter that, with the reduction in the quotas allocated to the Fleet and the preference for on-shore training over other and more costly forms of personnel training, it is necessary to consider improving training systems on shore. At the moment, however, the fleet is relying solely on its own efforts and on the enthusiasm, initiative, and skilled hands of its capable people and, fortunately, it still has quite a few of them.

Rocket Forces in 'Constant Combat Readiness'

PM2401142392 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 24 Jan 92 p 1

[Report by Major A. Dolinin under general headline "Society in Alarm. Economy in Crisis. Army Maintaining Combat Capability. We Start Each Day Overcoming Difficulties"—first two paragraphs are editorial introduction]

[Text] In a recent interview for SAARLAENDISCHER RUNDFUNK, FRG Bundestag Deputy Voigt stated that the strategic nuclear weapons situated on former USSR territory have been removed from combat readiness. According to available information, he added, the nuclear warheads have been removed from strategic missiles.

As we were told at the Strategic Rocket Forces Main Staff, the Rocket Forces are still in a state of constant combat readiness. As for dismantling the nuclear warheads, this can only relate to those rockets which have ended their operational life. The situation among troops is stable and the new training year has begun in an organized way, as our correspondent saw for himself when he visited some of the units. Although, of course, there are many difficulties in organizing the combat training of missilemen.

"This is the first time," Colonel General I. Sergeyev, deputy commander for combat training of the Strategic Rocket Forces, told me, "that we have met a situation in which the disruption of the draft and the discharge of servicemen who are also students—which is still taking its toll even now—have reduced the staffing of rocket units to 50 percent, and in some units the figure is even lower...."

Lieutenant Colonel S. Borovskiy confirmed: It is difficult now to maintain the stability of shifts on combat duty, to select details, and despite all this organize combat training. What solution has been found?

"There is only one way out of this situation," Lieutenant Colonel A. Khashegulgov said. "To reduce certain types of details and devise a deployment of manpower that would keep the withdrawal of sergeants and men from combat training to a minimum. Exercises will be repeated for those who miss them."

This approach is yielding results. An analysis of the first few days of training shows that, excluding valid absences, 95 percent of servicemen and all military units attended exercises.

Exercises followed the familiar pattern: emergency musters, route march preparations, and various types of tactical problems, but they were of great interest to students. I was persuaded of that by my conversations with Captain S. Kalashnikov, military affairs expert and chief of the best launch combat detail in the formation, Captain Yu. Nezdoliy, Senior Lieutenant M. Zhaparov, Warrant Officer I. Khudyashov, Sergeant S. Zinoveyenkov....

Even the unfavorable weather conditions were no obstacle to the rocketmen. And here in the Kazakh steppes it must be said that conditions are exceptional. Just take the wind. This wind, known colloquially as "babay," persists for a week at a time once it starts blowing. And there is no escape from the wind here....

The field exercises, nevertheless, went well. Incidentally, the opinion of the main staff officers on this matter were

confirmed by the computer. For the first time ever, the results of readiness for the new training year, as measured by 100 parameters, were fed into the computer. For example, the computer analyzed the timeliness and the quality of the transmission of tasks and initial data for the planning of combat trainings, the quality of training musters, officers' knowledge of directive documents, the readiness of the material-technical base, the training of new recruits, and material and technical backup for the training process.... For many parameters a positive dynamic was recorded in comparison with the previous training year.

Stolyarov Expounds on Stability of Armed Forces

PM2401205192 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Jan 92 First Edition p 2

[Article by Nikolay Stolyarov, chairman of the Commonwealth of Independent States Armed Forces Main Command Committee: "'Army More Stable Than Commonwealth'—So Nikolay Stolyarov Believes"]

[Text] The recent Officers' Assembly will be remembered for a long time yet for various reasons. While the trail is still fresh, I would like to say what bothers me. Remember how much emotion and passion there was, and, at the same time, the thoughts and ideas.

The reader may have noticed that the start of perestroyka involved the Army in politics to a considerably greater extent than before. Military people were actively involved in the election campaign, many became deputies, chiefs of local administrations even... But the Army's subsequent participation in the solution of local conflicts introduced some unpleasant episodes into the history of the Armed Forces.

Yes, our Army still falls far short of world standards of combat capability, unfortunately. Because it is unprofessional and because it is encumbered by old practices. There has been an active process of attaining a new standard of quality that will match the new era of wars—high-technology wars.

It can scarcely be said that any of the countries that make up the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] has its own distinctive strategic-military interests. Yet the separation into independent structures will make these armies fall much farther short of world standards. Only from the standpoint of World War II doctrines can one seriously see independent states' autonomous armies as a productive option.

As has been said many times before, in material terms servicemen are far from well off at the moment. And the republics do not have the means to provide special upkeep for the military. I hope the officers appreciate this. I believe in the officer's honor. What I really do not understand is how one can swear a new oath without abandoning a previous oath to serve one's people. Even the Bolsheviks, when they utilized the knowledge of the tsarist army's officers, did not force them to take that step.

There is much talk at the moment about the CIS Army's having a lower standard of culture than the USSR Army. What is this opinion based on? The assembly was practically the first time the officers had had the opportunity to express themselves—they were unused to it, of course. That is why it was so explosive. But by and large our officers did not allow themselves to be drawn into fruitless political debate either by the ultraradicals or by the conservatives. Or, worse still, into political action. The main result of the assembly, in my view, was the officers' philosophical shift in the direction of the complete depoliticization and departyization of the Army. At the same time, the assembly performed the task of somewhat bringing to their senses the politicians whose decisions did not take account of the fact that the Armed Forces are a powerful integrational factor. One must also mention the importance of giving society such a full picture of the mood in the Army and of the position of the Armed Forces leadership.

If the leaders of the states in the CIS will think seriously about military policy matters (there was neither the need nor the experience to do so before) they would undoubtedly not disunite the Army.

But if the profound process of the Army's disintegration goes ahead, then, combined with the increasing economic ills, it could cause in society processes that I shudder to contemplate.

Political & Social

Movement for Democratic Reforms Elects Council

Becoming 'Active'

LD2501200992 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Report by reporter V. Vinogradov from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The Movement for Democratic Reforms continues to take organizational shape. Today's board meeting adopted a statute on the movement's political council. The members of the council were elected. Well-known politicians like Shatrov, Bunich, Petrakov, Rutskoy, and others were elected to the political council. There are 46 members in total.

This body has been set up to coordinate the movement's activities on a continuing basis. The political council is empowered to draft policies and programs for political action, to act on behalf of the Movement for Democratic Reforms, to liaise internationally, and to represent the movement in relations with other organizations.

An auditing commission was also elected. In the near future the political council intends to elaborate the movement's stand on military reform, on processes

connected with the switch to the market and its social consequences, and to set up a center to promote interethnic harmony.

The Movement for Democratic Reforms is starting to become active now that its first constituent congress is over.

Yakovlev on Outcome

LD2501214592 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] The political council of the Movement for Democratic Reforms [MDR] held an extended meeting in the Russian capital today. It considered a range of organizational matters. In particular, the membership of the movement's political council and its auditing commission has been established. The procedure for admission to the movement for collective members has been defined.

The meeting evaluated the current situation in the country and defined the MDR's position as a multiparty environment takes shape.

Speaking at a news conference on the outcome of the meeting, one of the MDR leaders, Aleksandr Yakovlev, said:

[Begin Yakovlev recording] The situation is so complex now that it is difficult to assess. It is truly unpredictable in the extreme; it is extremely complex. In essence, a change of systems is taking place—a change in practical terms, not theoretical or conceptual. Because it is a change in practice, concomitant complexities are emerging. I personally believe that the Russian Government, its leadership and ministers, must be given a chance now that they have begun this extremely difficult job. We have to wait and tolerate a little, show restraint. [end recording]

Speaking a little later about the prospects for success for the reforms in Russia, Aleksandr Yakovlev commented:

[Begin Yakovlev recording] I would believe in a favorable outcome for the events and the surrounding circumstances if not just food and agricultural and industrial output were right now thrown into market conditions, but also all kinds of production, land, capital, and housing. In addition to this, rapid and serious land reform must be seriously begun. Trade must be handed over to the private sector. Concrete and specific moves must be made to demonopolize industry so that our monopolist industrialists are prevented from dictating their own terms and flattering their unrestrained egos. [end recording]

Article Assesses Sociopolitical Situation

PM2401150992 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 17 Jan 92 p 1

[Article by Gennadiy Seleznev "Viewpoint": "We Will Always Have Time to Run in Different Directions"]

[Text] It seems to me, gentlemen comrades, that we have held rallies to our heart's content, measured our respective sovereignties ad infinitum, and been unspeakably rude about entire nations and parties, with everyone left looking foolish as a result. The powerful USSR has disintegrated, but I cannot see any happy people beneath the debris. Everyone seems to have suffered from the Belovezhskaya meeting, but neither the astrologists nor the patriarchs will predict how many ordeals still lie ahead. A postulate well known since ancient times has been applied: Divide and rule.

Like an amoeba, our great state is dividing into large and microscopic cells. Everywhere you look there are rulers with all the standard attributes: palaces, aircraft, armored cars, expensive food, guards, retinue, bright lights, and deputies... Meanwhile, ordinary people are being worn into shadows, spending half their life in all kinds of waiting lines and fighting for physical survival in the shell of a selfish dream: To somehow get themselves and their families through to the next day. There is no sign of any fraternity, community spirit, or love for one's neighbor. We are crushing each other to death in bread lines, shooting and stabbing one another without a moment's hesitation, simply on the basis of hair or eye color, and driving old men to seek refuge in the church porch....

Never before has our history seen such universal shame, such refined masochism. The best known "prophets" no longer dare to blame the Soviet system for this. They seem really scared by the fruits of their destructive labor. They are squabbling and bickering among themselves, seeking treasure islands where they can escape, and acting as if they were at a race course, changing their bets from one influential rider to another. However much radicals may scorn the concepts of a "great state" and "friendship between peoples," none of us will have confidence in the future if they are not put into practice.

It is said that there is no force capable of restoring our powerful state. Is that so? Why then do our rulers not ask their people about this? Why was no parliament bold enough to honestly and directly formulate the question for a referendum: "Do you want to live outside the Soviet Union?"

No, all questions were formulated in such a way that the answers could be interpreted any way you wanted, to suit any political situation. Sovereignty was elevated to the status of an absolute, and now nations are being played off one against the other in an attempt to establish who owes most to whom and who fed, clothed, and shod whom. Everything in the Union has disintegrated, apart from the Army—and we must not lose that, because it is

our common protector. We must halt parliamentary activity that is destroying the USSR Constitution, announce elections to a national assembly from all the former Union republics, and jointly formulate the question for a nationwide referendum on our country's future, single statehood, and proud name.

We must not elect just anyone to the assembly: We must elect real statesmen, wise and sensible people capable of seeking ways to ensure our common survival and unity, rather than those who love scuffling for the microphone to give vent to their own ambitions. Only when all the people have said whether they want to live together or separately can we decide who should run the country and how.

Media

TASS Carries Press Review for 24 Jan

LD2401102792 Moscow TASS in English 0655 GMT 24 Jan 92

["Review of Russian Press"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow January 24 TASS—Territories of the former Soviet Union are being revised, NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA wrote on Friday [24 January]. According to NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, Russian Parliament's decisions on the Black Sea Fleet and Crimea manifest there is a full-scale crisis in relations between Russia and Ukraine. In the meantime, Latvian parliament announced of its claims on Russian territories in the Pskov region, NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA wrote.

In its Friday issue PRAVDA described as arrogant the decisions by the most nonviolent Karelian Republic at its parliamentary session which opened on Tuesday [21 January] to consider leaving the Russian Federation.

SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA interviewed Ukrainian National Guard Commander-in-Chief Vladimir Kukharets. According to Kukharets, Russians and Ukrainians are of the same blood and they shouldn't sever the ages-old ties but strengthen their military and political cooperation.

Russian Railroad Minister Gennadiy Fadeyev told PRAVDA the Commonwealth of Independent States was planning a meeting between its railroad chiefs to sign the treaty on principles of coordinating the railroad traffic.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in its Friday issue analysed the state of charity assistance and came to the conclusion charity service which is so needed by elderly and lonely people, is at the brink of collapse because of lack of resources.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA published a memorandum on Russian leadership and its activities, prepared by the centre of independent studies "Russian Federation—Politics". The memo demonstrates that nomenklatura opposition to reform is as strong as never before.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA addressed the Armed Forces commanders to clarify Western allegations that strategic nuclear weapons were no longer ready to counter enemy attacks and so was the Navy. According to a strategic nuclear command official, the Armed Forces are kept in constant combat readiness. A Navy command official was quoted as saying naval defense tasks are performed in full, KRASNAYA ZVEZDA reports.

PRAVDA discussed on Friday the criminal situation in the Commonwealth of Independent States and came to the conclusion it is getting from under control as the former Soviet republics fail to coordinate their legal bodies' activities. At the same time, criminals don't recognize the sovereignties, PRAVDA wrote.

SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA wrote there are now 14.2 families [as received] of the former Soviet Union waiting for their living conditions to be improved and 285.8 thousand of them are families of the military. The newspaper considers the situation to be a consequence of the reckless armed forces reduction policy.

Press Review for 25 Jan

LD2501083892 Moscow TASS in English 0643 GMT 25 Jan 92

["Press Review"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow January 25 TASS—Reporting about the work of the Russian parliament on Friday [24 January], today's newspapers highlight the key issue the parliamentarians dealt with—the republican budget.

The newspaper NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA writes that although the budget proposed by the Russian Government was not endorsed by deputies, "the spending presented in the draft was not only approved," but, as Russian parliament speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov said, increased by 12 billion roubles.

Newspapers continue to give prominent display to materials dealing with economic reforms in Russia. RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA published an interview with eminent economist Nikolay Petrakov, director of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Market Problems. Petrakov points out the fiscal policy currently pursued in Russia is erroneous and that "one should seek a system to resemble the monetary policy which was enacted in post-war Western Europe."

The newspaper SOVETSKAYA ROSSIA, summing up the results in the economy of 1991 relying on the figures of the State Committee for Statistics, writes that "efforts to stabilise the economy of the Russian Federation and its finances have failed."

In the article "the December Coup," the newspaper PRAVDA analyses the chronology of events in the former Soviet Union in the latter half of 1991. PRAVDA

draws the ambiguous conclusion about what the peoples of the former Soviet Union received instead of the former mighty state. "Time will show what we have received in exchange for the USSR in December," PRAVDA writes. It observes that "skipping from the USSR to the Commonwealth without a transition period was impermissible."

In an interview with NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze spoke out in favour of the idea of a European integration to include all republics in the Commonwealth of Independent States. He emphasised the need to pursue a flexible policy within this entity.

Press Review for 27 Jan

LD2701071492 Moscow TASS in English 0700 GMT 27 Jan 92

["Review of the Press"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow January 27 TASS—The daily national newspaper PRAVDA carries on Monday [27 January] a series of comments on the domestic and foreign political situation of Russia and other Commonwealth member-states.

The food problem is in the focus. "Shall we be able to feed ourselves?", PRAVDA queries. "This question seemed a mere rhetorical turn of the phrase until recently is now a major headache in practically every family. [sentence as received] The hard food situation has been further aggravated by price liberalization. Price races have not only failed to increase the amount of food on offer but, on the contrary, has resulted in dwindling production of food, and reduction of deliveries to shops. Why are privatisation and financial reform lagging behind? Why aren't entrepreneurs and producers interested in more output? The government's efforts do not add up to a clear-cut streamlined system of treatment for the ailing economy. It looks as if a sieve is being used to block out chaos".

"Judging by everything, what is completely lacking among the means of implementing reform is the human factor," PRAVDA says in another article. "As it stands, the reform makes the producer, seeking to boost prices to make up for his unproductive efforts, the distributor, who derives high interest off the price of the purchase, and the state eager to rob the buyer."

"In a few days, President Boris Yeltsin will travel to New York to take part in the meeting of the U.N. Security Council in which Russia took the seat of the Soviet Union recently," PRAVDA says in another commentary. "The Russian president is now welcome to many capitals. It is gladdening but one should not be tempted to think that the world is aflame with love for Russia and its president. This kind of loving stems above all from the feeling of concern over the unpredictability of events in our house. This anxiety can be lessened by guarantees the West is expecting from Russia. They relate to political and financial problems, business links and—more than anything else—nuclear arms control. Guarantees are expected from Boris Nikolayevich himself—whether he can be trusted without verification...".

Listing this country's numerous ills, PRAVDA says nevertheless:

"It is impossible to ignore Russia even when it is weakened by chaos, troubles and unpredictability. It remains a major link in the geopolitical alignment of forces, a part of civilization without which the fates of the world and mankind would be much poorer".

PRAVDA carries an analysis of the situation around Western humanitarian aid to Russia and other CIS member-states.

"It is alarming how we have amassed credits and debts. There is no getting away from the IMF vices, interest and credit repayment, demands and ultimatums... The Government of Russia, as earlier that of the USSR, shamelessly listed Western aid and credits among items of the plan for pulling the country out of the crisis. We are being drawn into an endless race after ever new credits, gifts and donations—and all this while the country is going through an appalling economic crisis and depletion of exports".

The joint team of the Commonwealth of Independent States counts on winning about 24 medals, including nine or ten gold, at the forthcoming Olympic Games, PRAVDA was told by the teams's leading coach.

The Norwegian team is expected to win just as many and the German team is the favorite with predicted 29 medals, 10 or 11 of which will be gold.

Under the headline "CIS legislators are uniting", ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA's Observer Aleksandr Linkov comments on the results of a meeting in Minsk of parliamentarians from CIS member countries.

The meeting stressed the need to coordinate activities of legislators in CIS member countries and reached some specific agreements on coordinating their efforts.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA carries the text of a communique adopted at the close of the Russian governmental delegation's official visit to Sweden.

Economist Anatoliy Deryabin said in an interview with the same newspaper Russia needs monetary reform. Commenting on the financial policy of some CIS member-states he stressed that Russia "cannot do without money reform".

The KOMMERSANT weekly leads with the article "The reform has not lived up to the president's expectations", which stresses that the Russian Government failed to provide social protection to people to offset the price liberalization shock.

International Affairs

Yeltsin Receives Strauss, Bush Message

LD2401190892 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1741 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow, 24 Jan (TASS)—Russian President Boris Yeltsin received U.S. Ambassador to Russia Robert Strauss in the Kremlin today, the Russian president's press service reports. The ambassador passed on a personal message from the U.S. President and briefed the Russian leadership on the U.S. Administration's decision to organize an airlift of urgent medical aid and food to Russia and other CIS states in February.

Boris Yeltsin thanked the U.S. leadership for its support for the economic reforms, which are entering their decisive phase in Russia. The Russian and U.S. Presidents will discuss this topic at Camp David during Boris Yeltsin's forthcoming U.S. visit.

Certain fundamental approaches to and the specific policies of Russia and the United States on disarmament, above all nuclear disarmament, were also discussed during the meeting.

Yeltsin Cancels Meeting With Japan's Watanabe

OW2701114392 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1105 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A Russian Foreign Ministry official told INTERFAX's correspondent that Russian President Boris Yeltsin will not receive Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe because he will not be in Moscow for the next several days. He pointed out that Yeltsin's refusal has no political grounds. The official denied allegations that Yeltsin's refusal to meet Watanabe is caused by Tokyo's position at the Washington conference on aid to the Commonwealth states. Japan once again linked aid to Russia and other Commonwealth states to the Kuril Islands problems.

Misses Interview With BBC

OW2701130792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1255 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian President Boris Yeltsin has cancelled his meeting with Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe scheduled for Monday [27 January] morning and a live interview with the BBC. A high-ranking Russian Foreign Ministry offical told Japanese diplomats that Boris Yeltsin is now not in Moscow dealing with urgent domestic problems and preparing for his tour of Great Britain, USA, and Canada to begin January 30. [sentence as received].

According to the Russian Presidential office, Yeltsin postponed the interview with the BBC until Wednesday [29 January] and that journalists will be provided with information concerning his today's absence in Moscow Tuesday [28 January] afternoon.

Watanabe Expresses 'Regret'

LD2701125292 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1154 GMT 27 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Nikishov]

[Text] Moscow, 27 Jan (TASS)—Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe has expressed regret that the meeting scheduled for today with Russian President Boris Yeltsin cannot take place. But at the same time "there is complete understanding for the Russian president's current heavy workload," noted Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Georgiy Kunadze, who reported briefly to journalists on the content of a conversation which took place today between his boss, Andrey Kozyrev, and the Japanese minister. [Tokyo KYODO in English at 0145 GMT on 27 January in a similar report adds: "...Watanabe said Sunday night [26 January] he anticipates no change in Japanese-Russian relations because of the cancellation. "I can only assume something unavoidable happened," Watanabe told reporters. He said Yeltsin would be away from Moscow on Monday and Tuesday, and will skip the opening session Tuesday of a two-day Middle East peace conference."]

Describing this meeting as "good and interesting" Georgiy Kunadze reported that "accord had been reached that the next session of the working group on the peace treaty between Russia and Japan is to take place in Moscow on 10-11 February." There was also discussion of issues concerning Japan's participation in the aid program for Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] countries, and primarily Russia. The Russian side stressed that the Russian Government agrees with Japan's intention to send a considerable proportion of this aid to far eastern districts and major industrial centres in Siberia.

The Japanese minister invited Andrey Kozyrev to visit Japan. The invitation was gratefully accepted. It was decided that the visit will take place in the last 10 days of March.

Michio Watanabe will take part in the Moscow meeting on organizing multilateral talks on the Near East which opens tomorrow.

Japan Agrees To Discuss Peace Pact in Feb

OW2701152892 Tokyo KYODO in English 1509 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow, Jan. 27 KYODO—Japan and Russia agreed Monday [27 January] to hold talks in mid-February in Moscow on a peace treaty to formally end hostilities that have throttled bilateral relations since the end of World War II, Japanese officials said.

Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe and Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev reached the agreement during talks at the Russian Foreign Ministry.

The accord calls for holding a bilateral task force meeting of experts on the peace treaty issue, according to Japanese officials accompanying Watanabe.

The get-together marked the first foreign ministerial contact between the two countries since the former Soviet Union was disbanded last month.

A territorial dispute over four islands off Japan's northernmost main island of Hokkaido taken by the Soviets at the end of the war has blocked the signing of a bilateral peace pact.

Kozyrev also agreed in principle to comply with a Japanese request to visit Tokyo in March for talks with Japanese leaders aimed at expediting the peace treaty, the officials said.

"I will convey the confirmed concrete timing in the near future" to the Japanese Government, Kozyrev was quoted as saying.

Kozyrev also said the Russian Government will "consider" Japan's proposal for a visit by Yeltsin, the officials said.

Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa has voiced concern that economic uncertainties gripping the former Soviet republics might impede talks on returning the four Russian-held islands.

Japanese officials accompanying Watanabe believe the latest agreement will provide a forum for speeding up the territorial negotiations.

Watanabe warned Kozyrev that Yeltsin's possible failure to visit Japan "might be interpreted" as signaling Moscow's neglect for Tokyo's concerns, the officials said. "Japan-Russia relations is important," Watanabe was quoted as telling Kozyrev.

Trips to most group of seven countries by the Russian leader have already been planned.

Watanabe, however, hailed Kozyrev's remarks in a television interview last December that Russia would invalidate a memorandum dismissing the 1956 Japan-Soviet joint declaration committing Moscow to return two of the four islands upon the completion of the peace treaty.

The memorandum, issued in 1960 by the former Soviet Foreign Ministry, stated that the renewal of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty earlier that year had prompted Moscow to dishonor the 1956 joint declaration.

Watanabe told Kozyrev that he "came to harbor deeper respect" for Kozyrev since hearing of his remarks on the memorandum.

Watanabe said other G-7 members understand that a drastic improvement in Japan-Russia relations is not possible until Moscow agrees to resolve the bilateral territorial dispute.

Should Russia agree in principle to return the four islands, Tokyo would take a "flexible" stand over the specific timing and conditions of the transaction, Watanabe was quoted as telling his Russian counterpart.

"It is crucial for the two nations to initiate a new phase in their relations on the firm assumption that every problem, including the territorial dispute, should be solved on the basis of law and justice," Kozyrev reportedly said in response.

But he stopped short of making a clear commitment on the territorial issue. "We should consider balancing what is desirable and what is possible," Kozyrev said.

Watanabe, however, told Kozyrev that Japan is considering extending 100 million dollars in loans to Moscow through the Export-Import Bank of Japan.

He then urged Russia to take steps that would encourage Tokyo to extend an additional 500 million dollars worth of economic assistance, an implicit call for further concessions on the territorial dispute.

Kozyrev on Yeltsin's Absence at Mideast Talks

LD2701110592 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1036 GMT 27 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Nikishov]

[Text] Moscow, Jan 27 (TASS)—"The Russian president is not obliged to participate in tomorrow's opening of the Moscow talks on organizing multilateral Middle East negotiations," Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev said. After meeting the Israeli foreign minister today, he was asked why Boris Yeltsin will not attend. Kozyrev commented that in keeping with an existing agreement, the Russian and U.S. foreign ministers will jointly preside over tomorrow's meeting. "The president," he said, "is not obliged to participate." He added that Boris Yeltsin currently has a very heavy workload and is preparing for a visit to the United States and for meetings in London and Paris. Much of his time is also being taken up by Russia's internal problems. "This, as far as I understand, is recognized by our foreign partners," Andrey Kozyrev stressed.

Kozyrev, Israeli Foreign Minister Discuss Talks

LD2701101392 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0944 GMT 27 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Nikishev]

[Text] Moscow, 27 Jan (TASS)—Russia is prepared to play "the role of honest broker" in a Near East settlement, Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev stated on receiving Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi in the

private residence of the Russian Foreign Ministry today. The conversation between the ministers took place on the eve of the Moscow meeting on the organization of multilateral talks on the Near East which opens tomorrow.

Answering a question by the TASS correspondent on Russian interests in the Near East, Andrey Kozyrev stated that Russia is committed to the maximum prevention of possible outbursts of confrontation and to the implementation of a peace settlement. "We are also interested in economic cooperation with all the countries of the region, including Israel," the minister stressed.

Egypt's Musa Comments on Talks With Kozyrev

NC2701115492 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0956 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow, 27 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev this morning.

Musa made a statement after the 45-minute meeting. He said that he held important discussions focusing on the Middle East peace march, the peace process, and the multilateral talks that will start 28 January, as well as on the relationship between the multilateral and bilateral negotiations and the peace process.

He said Egypt and Russia clearly agree that the peace process must be balanced at all stages and must be based on the principle of land for peace.

Musa said he has received information confirming that the Palestinian delegation will attend the multilateral peace talks.

In response to a question on whether the Palestinians have set any conditions for their attendance, he said Israel has also set conditions. He hopes agreement will be reached on the subjects under discussion.

The Russian foreign minister said they discussed preparations for tomorrow's multilateral talks. They also affirmed that these talks should be held in an honorable way that takes into consideration the interests of all parties.

He said it is important to study ways to make the meeting a success. He added that during his talks with Musa, they confirmed that they are proceeding down the right road and that the time is right and the potential is there for further progress toward peace.

The Russian foreign minister affirmed the importance of Egypt's support for the peace process in view of its essential role in the Middle East and the positive stand it expressed in today's meeting.

'Amr Musa is expected to meet today with the foreign ministers of Arab countries participating in the talks. Arab ambassadors in Moscow will attend the meeting to discuss coordinating the Arab stand at the multilateral talks.

Castro Supporters, Opposition Rally in Moscow

LD2501202192 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Report by reporter S. Sokolova from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] A demonstration was held outside the Cuban Embassy today. [video shows demonstrators, some with Cuban flag, jostling each other; police moving in to separate them] Most of those present support Fidel Castro.

[Begin unidentified man recording] We are Cubans, real Cuban patriots, who are defending the revolution against those who want to kill us. We will always support socialism. [end recording] [video shows close-up of banners, one of which says "Down With Castro's Dictatorship!"; two men wrestling and punching each other; policemen rushing in to keep the two sides apart]

The two sides came to blows. The anti-Castro demonstrators numbered no more than five. They are Cuban students studying in Moscow. I got the impression that they are very determined people.

[Begin unidentified demonstrator recording] I think it is obvious to everybody that Fidel Castro is a dictator. I bet half those people do not believe the slogans they are shouting. [end recording]

Further on Cuban Students' Protest

LD2501230192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1735 GMT 25 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Igor Bulanov]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Jan (TASS)—A group of Cuban students from the Cuban Alliance went to the Cuban Embassy in Moscow today to express their disagreement with the policies being carried out by the Cuban leadership at this time. In addition to students, there were several staff members from Cuban foreign missions who belong to the Cuban Alliance, a recently created organization of which approximately 100 people who have asked for political asylum in Russia are members. On the placards carried by the students was written in Russian and Spanish: "Down With the Dictatorship of Fidel Castro!"

"This is a peaceful demonstration," Oscar Aguirres, one of the organizers, told a TASS correspondent. "We are protesting the dictatorship of Fidel Castro, who refuses to understand that his days are numbered and that the recent execution of saboteur Eduardo Diaz Betancourt, who did not carry out a single planned act of diversion, is an acknowledgement of the Cuban Government's own debility in the face of future democratic changes."

A TASS correspondent managed with difficulty to get into the Cuban Embassy, where a videotape of the trial of a group of insurgents led by Betancourt was being viewed. Catching sight of the demonstrators, resolute embassy staff moved toward them. Only the efficient actions of police officers from the embassy guard service made it possible to prevent this protest from developing into a free-for-all.

"Unfortunately, the students themselves provoked this incident," Jorge Luis Lopez, press attache of the Cuban Embassy in Moscow, told a TASS correspondent. For a long time, he remarked, these students have been attempting to obtain Russian residence permits, since they do not want to return to Cuba. For reasons beyond our control, their requests have not yet been met, but if they came to the embassy and requested an acceleration of the resolution of this matter, we have nothing against this. However, in the situation that occurred, the embassy staff's indignation was so great that we had difficulty controlling it."

Vorontsov Resigns; UN Personnel Reshuffled

PM2701093392 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 5

[IZVESTIYA's Aleksandr Shalnev report: "Personnel Reshuffles at United Nations. At Russian Mission Too"]

[Text] Yuliy Vorontsov, the Russian Federation's permanent UN representative, is quitting his post.

According to available information, he will leave for Moscow 2 February. Before that he is to "see to" Boris Yeltsin's visit to the headquarters of the international community. It was announced that the Russian president will take part in a special session of the UN Security Council 31 January at the level of heads of state and government of the council's 15 member countries—permanent and temporary.

What Yuliy Vorontsov will do on his return to Moscow and who will replace him in New York is presently a matter of supposition and pure speculation. Professional diplomats (incumbent foreign minister Andrey Kozyrev, for instance, who directly tackled the affairs of international organizations, the United Nations included, back in the former Union Foreign Ministry) and nondiplomats (Sergey Stankevich, in particular) have been named as possible candidates for Russian permanent representative.

It is a hard task to be a worthy successor to Yuliy Vorontsov. In his comparatively short time in this post he won the respect of both his fellow ambassadors and personnel within the UN Secretariat and, which is of no small importance, that of journalists covering the international community's activity.

People are saying that in Moscow Yuliy Vorontsov will be offered a post that has not yet been created, one linked with foreign policy and national security, and that Vorontsov's future rank will be that of state secretary. I repeat, this is pure supposition. The ambassador is keeping totally silent on this, not even letting very high-ranking personnel at the Russian mission in on his future.

Meanwhile, reshuffles are also coming in certain key positions in the UN Secretariat. The secretary general is shortly to announce the appointment of new people as his deputies as well as the redistribution of his deputies' functions. With "our" Vasiliy Safronchuk retiring on a UN pension, in all probability we will lose control over matters linked with the activity of the Security Council.

This authority will be transferred to the representative one of the other permanent Security Council members. Admittedly, under the UN Charter Secretariat personnel, including the highest-ranking personnel, are categorically forbidden to defend in the course of their activity interests other than the interests of the United Nations directly, but essentially authority has always been tacitly shared out among the "Big Five."

But although questions of the Security Council's activity will in all probability slip away from us, Russia will probably have its appointee among the deputy secretaries general and he will most likely be Vladimir Petrovskiy, who took care of our policy toward international organizations within the former Union Foreign Ministry—as deputy minister. The documents needed to adopt a decision on Petrovskiy's candidacy are already "passing" through UN offices.

If he becomes a deputy, it is being said that matters relating to UN information activity, including work with the press, may pass to him.

Humanitarian Aid Said Diverted to Mafia, Trade

924C0402A Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 8

[Article by Vadim Belykh: "Humanitarian Snare: Once Again On Western Aid, Which Turns Into a Gift for the Mafia"]

[Text] **Nothing comes as cheaply and gets sold as expensively as humanitarian aid. Sharing of alms, the delight of beggars, has become a profitable business with us. At least, this is the conviction of the officials at Sheremetyevo-2 international freight airport; they think that only six to seven percent of all foreign donations really go to the needy, the rest being rerouted to commercial retail trade, in their opinion.**

The head of the freight commercial service at the airport, Vladimir Medvedev, and I were walking around the huge square shell of the cargo warehouse in search of any trace of humanitarian aid. The general opinion was that all of it had been removed by then, but nobody would confirm this for sure. The bored pilots from Orenburg were adding to the uncertainty. They had spent over an hour already smoking among the containers. Their TU-134 plane No. 65136 emerged unexpectedly from the evening

dusk and violated every rule as it taxied to the warehouse without a "follow-me" car. In doing so it crossed the path of a huge "freighter" IL-76, which barely missed it. The violations were numerous, but they were all expunged by the fact that the plane came to receive humanitarian aid for its own city. Except that the pilots have not yet found either the aid or any representatives of Orenburg...

"It is a total mess here with this humanitarian aid," complained Medvedev, "we never really know what, when, and how much is going to arrive. A plane with a charity load may appear at any moment. The only thing is that nobody wants it all that much, it seems.

"One day we heard that two planes were approaching! We rushed to call the mayor's office, which is the principal addressee of the aid. We were trying to find out if that was true. It was a weekend and nobody was answering the phones. An hour later a DC-8 with 44 tonnes of food on board really landed in our airport. Another plane, an AN-124, for some reason ended up at Domodedovo airport. It is a total mess. Nobody even wants to keep a truck ready here, just in case.

"One evening, quite by accident, we discovered some people soaking in the rain. It turned out that the Audi firm sent fruit and other food for the Zagorsk Home for Deaf and Blind Children. Their teachers came to receive the gifts with just one truck, whose springs gave out from the weight of the load."

Some things that happen here are absolutely weird. Not long before my visit to Sheremetyevo, flight SU-262 brought some blessed bread for an orphanage, sent by a religious community from Vienna. There were 3.5 tonnes of it. Well, an ordinary flatbed truck was sent to fetch the bread. The loaves were dumped into it in a heap and thus carried away, under the falling snow. Some of the bread did not fit in the truck and was taken away much later.

Anyway, we have already become used to humanitarian aid, and as is customary with us we have now turned nasty. Not many people want to say a word of thanks to the foreign pilots and the people that accompany shipments any more. Moreover, I was told at the airport that these people are required to pay for everything—refueling, parking, document processing, accommodations for resting, meals—and pay with hard currency only. I must say that "meals" sounds too ambitious. As a rule, no food can be found at the Sheremetyevo freight airport for any money. A flight crew from the FRG, which by some irony of fate brought food to our country, spent almost an entire day wandering around the complex in search of something to eat or to drink. Finally, some local female employees felt sorry for the Western charity envoys and gave them some tea. They must have left with a rather definite impression of the mysterious Russian soul.

The mess reached its climax, however, at the beginning of January, during the infamous case of the British beef. As you know, a plane with 120 tonnes of frozen meat landed at Sheremetyevo, but the sanitary and veterinarian control would not allow it to be unloaded. Our officials were afraid of "mad cow disease" bacilli, and for some reason they felt distrustful of all the certificates produced by the British as proof of everything being normal. Their apprehensions might have been reasonable, but the plane could have spent a year in the airport without the meat being retested for quality, as Sheremetyevo has no facility for immediate food analysis. The British ambassador and a crowd of journalists spent almost an entire day by the ill-fated plane trying to find some solution to the difficult situation; however, according to those who saw all this, not a single representative of the Moscow leadership deigned to show up, even though the "humanitarian beef" was sent to none other than Moscow. Finally, the beef went to Murmansk, to the delight of its residents. However, the British were bid a surprise farewell. The two people accompanying the cargo had to pay for on-board meals. In hard currency, naturally.

The stories told by the airport officials may shed some light on the strange case of the English beef. Stories about various individuals of what is known here as "Caucasian descent," who showed quite an interest in this particular flight as early as a week before the plane came and insisted that this "aid" was to go to their warehouses only. Another question arises: Were their medical officials really overly cautious in expressing their fear of some unknown disease? Or was it none other than a settling of accounts by groups of resale dealers?

It seems that we understand humanitarian aid as something destined to be stolen. It begins to disappear right at the airport the moment the containers are unloaded. But the best treat is the boxes carried in the luggage holds of passenger planes. Naive foreigners are convinced for some reason that their gift boxes, which they do not even declare, will be rushed immediately to our needy. Sure! There was an occasion when 200 kilos of "humanitarian" oranges disappeared at once this way. A large number of such Christmas presents went into oblivion.

But all this is beside the point. Airport officials, people who process documents, and customs officials think that a lot of commercial enterprises are having their goods transported duty-free under the guise of humanitarian aid, within the most favored nation framework with all its advantages. It is not always clear where the shipments which truly correspond to their noble labelling even end up.

"All the aid used to come to definite addresses," says Vladimir Medvedev, "to concrete orphanages, hospitals, schools, etc. But now there is usually just one addressee—'Russia, the Moscow Mayor's Office.' As the aid comes in we call the mayor's office. Soon somebody brings a letter of attorney and collects the stuff. Sometimes the letter of attorney proves to be a fake, but even if it is the real thing, nobody knows where the humanitarian containers are taken or what is in them. The

consignment papers specify the cargo as 'consolidated,' which means 'various goods.' Try to figure that out."

Our customs officials are supposed to know, as part of their job, what is being brought into the country. We found out that they divide all the "humanitarian aid" into three categories: "elite" goods which include audio and video equipment, computers, and cars; are "central" goods—large shipments of powdered milk, meat, rice, canned food, sugar, etc.; and "scandal" goods—a mixture of various goods and foods, cigarettes, used clothes, etc...

The officials themselves admit that their main concern is not to check on the cargoes but to protect and preserve the packing. In other words, they try to prevent stealing. The customs officials, however, are not aware of the identity of the final addressee either. But almost each of them can remember occasions when some of the goods from the humanitarian aid that he had examined showed up on store shelves with rather high price tags.

The rest of the population is rescued from unpleasant thoughts by its almost complete ignorance of foreign languages. Because of this they cannot read the modest but tricky inscription "humanitarian aid for Russia" on many cans of meat sold in commercial stores at R40 to R100 each. Often the cans are also marked "free."

...The long wait finally ended for the Orenburg pilots. Their aid came, a shipment of stylish clothes and leather items from Bombay for the local firm Kora LTD company. Two representatives of Orenburg commerce said at first that they were just joking when calling their cargo humanitarian. Later they exchanged glances and switched to a mode "of total rejection," saying that they had nothing to do with all that, that they were just translators.

Sheremetyevo is expecting new shipments tomorrow. New scandals, too...

Claims of Taiwan Arms Deal Said 'Groundless'

LD2501032192 Moscow TASS in English 1913 GMT 24 Jan 92

[By unidentified TASS diplomatic correspondent]

[Text] Moscow January 24 TASS—Russia is not going to hold any talks with Taiwan on arms sales, according to a Russian Foreign Ministry official, who denied on Friday [24 January] foreign mass media claims a Taiwanese businessman is expected in Moscow to buy arms.

The businessman is expected, but with a quite different mission, the official said. Zhan Xiaoyan, the vice-president of the Taiwanese National Industrial Commission will arrive in Moscow at an invitation of the "ITI" joint venture to promote business relations with Russia. Claims of a planned arms deal are groundless, the official said.

The Russian Foreign Ministry has nothing to do with the visit and no official meetings are planned, according to the official.

The Russian leadership views Taiwan as an integral part of China and is not going to establish diplomatic relations with the island, the official explained.

Talks in Norway 'Inspire Optimism' for Future

LD2601054692 Moscow TASS in English 1342 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] Oslo January 25 TASS—The visit by the Russian parliamentary delegation to Norway aimed to identify new opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation in the changed economic and political conditions and form contacts with specific persons and organisations with which business can be done. The delegation seems to have accomplished this task.

The group of deputies, headed by Leonid Gurevich, chairman of the subcommittee of the Russian parliamentary Committee for International Affairs and Foreign Economic Relations, was invited by Norwegian parliamentarians who are members of the Nordic Council. The delegation returned to Moscow today.

Russian legislators held talks in the Norwegian parliament, several ministries and organisations. They met and conferred with representatives of Norway's business and financial communities. During consultations, the sides discussed wide-ranging issues related to strengthening inter-parliamentary ties to expand bilateral relations between Norway and Russia's north-western areas.

Asked by TASS to evaluate in brief the results of the visit, Gurevich noted it proved to be fruitful and useful at most. The level and substance of the talks held inspire optimism and hope for a continual development of dynamic inter-parliamentary, economic and cultural ties in future.

The delegation from the Russian Supreme Soviet has already received an invitation from Norwegian colleagues to participate as an observer rather than a guest in the anniversary session of the Nordic Council, the consultative body of the parliaments and governments of north European countries, which will take place in Helsinki in March.

Norwegians displayed strong desire to cooperate in many areas: public health, agriculture, shipping, environmental protection and tourism. They showed interest in proposals to set up joint concerns to implement ecological projects on the Kola peninsula, make a single map of nuclear waste, send field expeditions to clean up the already identified dumping sites and also to staff with Russian seamen crews of Norwegian Merchant Marine ships which in some cases experience an acute shortage of highly qualified personnel.

Gurevich said particular attention was paid to the organisation of the delivery and distribution of humanitarian

aid sent through local charity organisations within the framework of the funds set aside by the Norwegian Government.

The first two trucks with 24 tonnes of food are planned to be sent to Arkhangelsk and Murmansk on February 11. The cargo will be accompanied by Norwegian representatives who are also entitled to monitor its distribution.

Fuel Resources Accounts With Moldova Reviewed

LD2601102392 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] The Moldovan Government believes that the price of oil and other strategic resources must be liberalized. Republican Prime Minister Valeriy Muravskiy stated this in an interview with the INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER. He gave the interview to the paper while staying in Moscow.

In the capital, he met members of the Russian Government. Muravskiy discussed with them problems relating to the implementation of the bilateral intergovernmental agreement. Attention at the talks was mainly focused on the problem of accounts for fuel resources.

In the next few days, the Russian Government will consider the question of accounts with Moldova.

Protests Occur at Moldovan Mission in Moscow

AU2601192492 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1800 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] Chisinau [Kishinev] Radio Station announces that according to MOLDOVA PRES news agency, the permanent mission of the Government of the Republic of Moldova in Moscow was again the target of hooligan demonstrations from local extremists and individuals from Transdniestria. The demonstrators chanted pro-communist slogans and waved red flags of the former USSR and black flags of the anarchist forces. Since their hooligan acts did not arouse the interest of the passers-by, the extremists gave up their protest. MOLDOVA PRES emphasizes that the worrisome aspect of such demonstrations is not so much the stubbornness of the pro-communist elements, but rather the passive position of Russia's state power bodies. The news agency adds that it is a pity that the appeal addressed by President Mircea Snegur to Russia's President Boris Yeltsin in connection with the latest manifestations of extremist forces against Moldovan representatives had no visible effects.

Federation Affairs

Yeltsin Cancels Meetings Due to 'Cold'

OW2701104992 Tokyo KYODO in English 1036 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow, Jan 27—Russian President Boris Yeltsin canceled important political appointments scheduled for Monday [27 January] and Tuesday after coming down with a cold, a Yeltsin aide said Monday.

The aide denied that Yeltsin canceled his meeting with Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe on Monday and an appearance at Middle East peace talks in Moscow on Tuesday for political reasons.

The official did not mention Yeltsin's heart condition.

Another Yeltsin aide said the Russian leader must be at a presidential villa outside Moscow, but did not offer details.

Meanwhile, the presidential press office said there was an urgent need for Yeltsin to be away from Moscow for two days.

The office said there will be an announcement Tuesday afternoon to dispel speculation that Yeltsin is seriously ill.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev on Monday confirmed that Yeltsin will skip the Mideast peace talks Tuesday and Wednesday, the INTERFAX News Agency reported.

Kozyrev blamed Yeltsin's absence on a number of domestic political issues preoccupying the president, INTERFAX said.

Paper Investigates Details on Yeltsin's Health

PM2701145392 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 22 Jan 92 p 3

[Report from feature compiled by K. Belyaninov, S. Brulev, O. Volkov, S. Kucher, and V. Nedogonov under the general heading "High-Level Disease—Country Seized by 'Diplomatic Flu' Epidemic in 1991": "Russian President Treated Heaven Knows Where, But Nevertheless He Feels Good"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] The annulled Law "On the Institution of the Post of President of the USSR..." and the current Law "On the RSFSR President" contain no special provisions on the leader's health. Thus, following the example of Western reporters, we decided to investigate B. Yeltsin's personal state of health in a little more detail.

Nobody was able to tell us anything about medical services for the president and other top statesmen at the Therapy and Treatment Association under the Russian president's administration (the latest incarnation of the Fourth Administration).

"In all honesty, I have only just moved into this office and I have not managed to look into the system yet," the Association's Deputy Chief A. Blinov said. "Even before the collapse of the USSR, Yeltsin was not treated in the Russian Association. Now things would seem to be unchanged. Burbulis fell ill recently, but he was treated in a Ministry of Health hospital."

Even so, we did discover that Yeltsin does have a personal physician. He is part of the president's security service. Alas, we did not manage to talk to him. He is always close to the president.

The security service gave a clear-cut answer to a question on his personal state of health:

"Boris Nikolayevich feels very well." [passage omitted]

Further Reportage on News Agencies' Merger

PM2401144392 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 24 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 2

[Sergey Mostovshchikov report: "TASS and RIA NOVOSTI: Bolivar Abhors Pairs"]

[Text] On 22 January TASS reported, then almost immediately killed its report, that Boris Yeltsin had signed a decree on another merger: this time of TASS with the former APN, now RIA NOVOSTI, to form a single organization—RITA (the Russian Information Telegraph Agency). As IZVESTIYA was told by the TASS leadership, the wrongly transmitted item was jumping the gun. Yeltsin has not signed the decree on the RITA agency, but all the same he does have a draft on his desk.

Judging by available information, the media hybrid RITA has not been thought up merely for its own sake. Russia no longer has the money to maintain to very large state agencies with huge networks of correspondents in the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] and, especially, abroad. TASS has around 100 bureaus abroad, and RIA NOVOSTI has approximately the same number of branches formerly set up to provide cover for Soviet intelligence personnel and to station official propagandists in foreign states. This luxury, according to certain estimates, costs over $50 million per year.

According to the intention of Mikhail Poltoranin and his Ministry of the Press and Mass Information, which in fact elaborated the plan to cut the funds allocated to maintain the monsters of the state information network, RITA will be subordinate to the president, government, and parliament but—and this in particular ought to be nice—should cost those bodies far less.

As yet it is unclear who will exercise direct leadership of RITA. Rumors mention the name of Mikhail Fedotov, Mikhail Poltoranin's deputy, who supposedly thought up the whole RITA business himself and is intending to head the new agency. However, in conversation with your IZVESTIYA correspondent Fedotov categorically denied this claim.

"I had and have no intention of heading RITA," Mikhail Aleksandrovich says.

Judging by unofficial information, Fedotov in general is not delighted with Poltoranin's idea. He believes that if no one is capable of maintaining RIA NOVOSTI any longer, the state should simply cut the agency loose and tell it to get out of trouble by its own efforts, perhaps by issuing shares. This course of action is theoretically possible, but for this all the interested parties must discuss the problem together and arrive at a mutually acceptable solution.

In the meantime, it is known that TASS too is skeptical about the idea of giving the agency a woman's name. A proposal to give TASS a different name has already been elaborated and passed up "to the top." The name proposed is TASS. This stands for Telegraph Agency of the Commonwealth Countries.

Name To Retain TASS Trademark

LD2401181192 Moscow TASS in English 0607 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow January 24 TASS—A new Russian state information organisation is to be formed on the basis of the TASS news agency and part of the property of the former APN news agency, according to a Russian presidential decree.

The new information agency will be called ITAR—INFORMATION TELEGRAPH AGENCY OF RUSSIA, but the TASS trademark is to remain in the new name. The agency may be called TASS-ITAR, Russian Information Minister Mikhail Poltoranin explained on Thursday [23 January] to the collegium of the TASS news agency.

Russian financial difficulties forced the president to sign the decree, Poltoranin said. It is too expensive to have two parallel information organisations. Besides, the RUSSIAN INFORMATION AGENCY (RIA) demanded too big allocations for 1992. TASS also bears big expenses, especially in hard currency to maintain its offices abroad. Now it is getting part of the APN property, both at home and abroad, and is merging with the APN into a new information body.

TASS has switched to democracy in the four months after the August coup, Poltoranin said and thanked the agency for "the skilled and professional work done in the building in Tverskoy Boulevard".

There will be no cuts in TASS personnel, "the creative and technical potential of both agencies should be united in a powerful fist", Poltoranin said.

TASS preserves its functions of the news agency of the Commonwealth and transmits its news wires both inside the Commonwealth and abroad, the minister explained.

The Russian leadership wants TASS to promote the unification of all the Commonwealth member-states into a united information space and supports the new way of deciphering the name of the agency—telegraph agency of sovereign states, Poltoranin explained. But TASS is to continue reforming its structure and become a joint stock company with time, he added.

The TASS communication facilities allow to transmit information both to its subscribers and to the heads of

local administrations throughout Russia. "TASS is to work for the reforms", Poltoranin said.

The RIA news agency remains an alternative joint stock company. It will inherit the economic service of the former APN news agency which is to become an independent joint stock company, Poltoranin explained.

Return to 'Nomenklatura Methods'

LD2401235392 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] Mikhail Poltoranin, Russian minister of the press and mass information, told TASS that President Boris Yeltsin on 22 January signed Decree No. 37 on setting up the INFORMATION TELEGRAPH AGENCY OF RUSSIA [INFORMATSIONNO TELEGRAFNOYE AGENTSVO ROSSIYA (ITAR)], involving TASS—which now stands for TELEGRAPH AGENCY OF SOVEREIGN STATES [TELEGRAFNOYE AGENTSVO SUVERENNYKH STRAN]—and part of the Russian Information Agency-NOVOSTI [RIA-NOVOSTI]. Poltoranin also said that RIA will continue to exist as a joint stock company, with a proportion of NOVOSTI staff also setting up an economic agency. The minister said this is being done to conserve budget funds. RIA comments:

[Unidentified RIA commentator] What Poltoranin says about the economy is no more than a smokescreen to conceal the true aims of this operation. The lion's share of the expenditure borne by RIA-NOVOSTI is due to the miscalculations of Poltoranin himself in preparing the decree setting up the agency and the state's lack of foreign currency. RIA, against the will—or rather, by the will—of Press Minister Poltoranin, has inherited a large staff of foreign employees who ran the propaganda machine of the former APN and AN. It costs the treasury millions of dollars just to dismiss them, so no rubles are being saved. Out of RIA-NOVOSTI's more than 2,000 employees, the RIA joint stock company, which has been thrown back to its pre-August state, can take no more than 150. This means that RIA-NOVOSTI will have to cut its staff drastically. It has emerged that TASS also faces substantial cuts. However, RIA-NOVOSTI management had earlier put forward a plan for escaping the budget and creating a news company that would belong to the people, the shareholders in which could include not only Russia's newspapers and enterprises, but also ordinary Russian citizens. However, that proposal does not suit Poltoranin's scheme. His statement to TASS does not mention RIA-NOVOSTI at all, but speaks of an APN that has not existed since the summer of 1990 and of its disbandment. It seems that the present leadership needed RIA as a news agency independent of union power, so long as that agency was not in opposition to the latter. However, yesterday's opposition, now that it is in power, has decided that the time has come to cast off the democratic mask and return to the nomenklatura methods of governing all and sundry. One minister surreptitiously attributes to Russia's president an unconstitutional decree creating a monster to restore order, namely the Security and Internal Affairs Ministry; a second on the legal GPU [State Political Directorate] superdepartment; and a third on a body under the skittish name of RITA, which stands for RUSSIAN TELEGRAPHIC NEWS AGENCY [ROSSIYSKOYE INFORMATSIONNO- TELEGRAFNOYE AGENTSTVO]. This is being done so that, as in those still recent years, a (?pocket) TASS may distribute reports that have been flagged in advance: This for IZVESTIYA, and this for the regional papers; in short, we will hand it to you already cut and dried, so you need not worry about it; the government knows best. George Orwell's utopian novel *1984* describes the Ministry of Truth, a department like this; until August 1991 it was called the CPSU Central Committee Ideological Section in our country.

Official Denies Responsibility

OW2401143192 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1122 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Deputy press and mass media minister Mikhail Fedotov denied in an IF [INTERFAX] interview a Moscow News report saying that he was behind a decree issued by President Yeltsin merging two largest news agencies, RIA-Novosti and TASS. He was just ex-officio involved in drafting the decree, he said.

Russia's deputy minister also denied a suggestion by the weekly that he would head RITA, a news agency to be set up on the basis of the merger.

According to reports available to IF, TASS's former director general Vitali Ignatenko is to be appointed chief of RITA within the next few days.

Tentative budgets of RIA-Novosti and TASS for 1992 were to amount to 400 m [million] and 600 m rubles respectively. Another $35 m the two agencies were to spend to maintain their offices abroad. Merging the agencies into a new one is expected to save 400 m rubles and significant foreign-exchange amounts. However, even downsizing offices in foreign countries will entail large expenses. The new agency will have to pay $15 m in reimbursements for the breach of contracts to local staff who were employed by RIA and TASS offices abroad.

No decision has been made so far as to how many offices of RIA- Novosti and TASS and in what countries are to be closed.

Information Minister Interviewed

LD2701040892 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1950 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Interview with Russian Information Minister Mikhail Nikiforovich Poltoranin by German Sedov on 26 January; place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] [Sedov] Mikhail Nikiforovich, the amalgamation of TASS and RIA and the situation with our Moscow television and radio channel have made it necessary for us to turn to you for some explanations, so to speak. Where shall we begin?

[Poltoranin] I think we had better start with the decree of President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin setting up the ITAR [INFORMATION TELEGRAPH AGENCY OF RUSSIA] news agency, which has been set up on the basis of TASS and the NOVOSTI news agency, the former IAN, which came under the jurisdiction of not just Russia but the RSFSR Ministry of Press and Information following the August putsch.

[Sedov] As far as I know, both the management and journalists of RIA-NOVOSTI are worried about the fact that this merger allegedly threatens some kind of monopolization. They are proposing that the Russian agency, in particular, should become independent, in the form of a joint-stock company.

[Poltoranin] I will reply as follows. What brought about this decree? Indeed, my reply will contain the answer to your question. First, the decree was brought about by the need to economize on resources. We asked for 7.5 billion rubles [R] for the upkeep of the entire mass media; the Supreme Soviet, confirming this extraordinary deficit-free budget, gave us just R3.0 billion. But this R3.0 billion includes resources for both the mass media and culture. In other words, we are getting very little indeed. TASS has asked us for R300 million for its maintenance in 1992; RIA-NOVOSTI has asked for R683 million plus an additional $37 million, those very dollars of which we have such a shortage today for medicines, bread, or anything.

So, to save the overseas bureaus from going under, and indeed stopping these organizations from going under—regarding the first part of the question—we opted to merge the two state-sector bodies. The idea behind this is demonopolization. We are not monopolizing, quite the opposite. Part of what was APN is being attached to TASS while RIA, which was set up as a commercial and shareholders' company, remains. In this way we are creating one state and two independent organizations from two state organizations.

I can tell you this: Standing regulations have already been drafted for the INFORMATION TELEGRAPH AGENCY OF RUSSIA [Informatsionnoye Telegrafnoye Agentstvo Rossii]; ITAR-TASS is what it will be called. These regulations say that the agency is a self-governing organization engaged in news and other activities and is aimed at domestic and foreign audiences on a commercial basis on the basis of creative autonomy, objectivity, and openness. To maintain its international status and long-term agreements concluded with foreign subscribers and media outlets and firms, and since it succeeds TASS, the agency intends to retain the old abbreviation of TASS in foreign markets.

[Sedov] Perhaps at this point we could move on to television. It turns out that at Ostankino we have heard about a decision to set up a Moscow channel, and about the programs on this channel. As far as I can recall, back in August our All-Union Television and Radio Company—as it was then called—was agitating for just such a special entity for the capital, an independent television and radio service. This, in our opinion, arose from the need for democratic reforms within the mass media, and we suggested that representatives of the public, Moscow, and oblast people's deputies be involved in this Moscow television and radio organization. Yet the decree says that the Moscow company is being set up mainly by your ministry, right? And by the editorial staff and Moscow mayoralty. How do you view all these happenings, and do you agree with this status?

[Poltoranin] What we ourselves want—and we discussed this idea with Yegor Yakovlev and with others—is for the new company around the third channel to be based not only on the Moscow mayor's office, but also include really public organizations. Most of all, it should include a structure like the Moscow Soviet.

Generally, the basic principle is one of demonopolization. I will tell you that over the past year, while the Ministry has existed, 1,700 new independent newspapers have been registered here in Russia, along with 1,800 new independent publishing houses, dozens of independent TV and radio companies, and dozens of independent information agencies of various kinds.

I was pleased, for example, to recently receive a large group of workers from our state publishers—they belong to the (?ASK) association—who came to complain that it has become difficult for them to work and that they are unhappy with the work of the ministry. Why has it become difficult to work? Because independent publishing houses which have formed have started to compete with them and put pressure on them; they have begun to resist, as it were.

The position of today's RIA-NOVOSTI is the same. We gave them R12 million, we gave them grounds, we gave them everything, to work at their leisure. Instead of doing that they began to draw back under the roof of the state structure; that way you do not have to work too hard, and production there—they have 4136 people, quite a lot. They produce a low output, and they are always free to fly off on business trips abroad at the state's expense. They have a free hand with these funds. But the people will not put up with them. The people are asking: Where is all our money going when there is nothing for us to eat? So what we are talking about now is the policy with which the Ministry is occupied. It is a policy of demonopolization and the democratization of all the media.

Resolution Adopted on Protecting Publishing

LD2501142892 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1510 GMT 22 Jan 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] The Russian Parliamentary Committee for Mass Media and Liaison with Public Organisations examined and adopted a draft resoultion on measures to ensure the state protection of news organisations and state book publishing in 1992. The draft resolution envisages exempting newspapers and magazines from paying the value added tax in 1992. It proposes that five-year interest-free credits be extended to the periodicals and fixed prices for newsprint (below 5,000 rubles per tonne) and offset print (below 7,000 rubles per tonne) be set.

The draft also plans to establish a state order for pulp- and paper mills for the supply of newsprint and binding cardboard in the volume not below 80 per cent of the supplies for the state in 1991. in this case, the tax on profits is reduced by 50 per cent and the tax on currency earnings is also reduced by half for these enterprises. True, it is simiultaneously envisaged to cut the enterprises' export quotas by one third.

Businessmen Polled on Popularity of Newspapers

LD2601134492 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] An telephone opinion poll has been conducted among Russian business circles in Moscow with regard to the popularity of publications, their economic information, and advertisements. It was found that businessmen give preference to IZVESTIYA and ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA among the daily newspapers. According to those asked, the best quality economic information is in IZVESTIYA, NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, and ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA. The lowest quality is in PRAVDA and SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA. This data is published in the weekly MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI.

Medics Plan for Strike; Cite Demands

PM2401200192 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 25 Jan 92 p 2

[Interview with A.V. Kuznetsov, deputy chairman of Union of Russian Federation Health Personnel, by Valentina Proskurina; place and date not given: "Medics Threaten Strike"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] The Union of RSFSR Health Personnel warned about the possibility of this action last November. Then medics in the Kuzbass held some demonstrations with the moral backing of their colleagues from other regions. The Russian Government does not seem to have taken the threat of a general strike seriously. Now one has been announced, starting 25 January.

A.V. Kuznetsov, deputy chairman of the Union of Russian Federation Health Personnel, said:

[Kuznetsov] Some 73 of the republic's 77 regions have expressed willingness to take part in the strike. It is intended to last up to five days. Rallies, demonstrations, pickets, and assemblies will be held everywhere at labor collectives.

[Proskurina] What is the crux of your demands of the government?

[Kuznetsov] Medics' paramount concern is to save our health service from breaking up once and for all. In the first quarter of this year alone we need according to the most modest estimates roughly 35 billion rubles [R]. Some R17.9 billion are planned. Moreover medicines have quadrupled in price and the price of transportation services has risen five-fold. The medics' pay raise is simply ludicrous and puts them on the poverty line. That is why there are two basic points in our demands: that appropriations for the health service be increased and wages raised. If the government does not accommodate us, it will be telling the people honestly that it does not guarantee everyone free medical services inasmuch as the funds allocated are only enough for "emergencies" and the treatment of children and the poor.

[Proskurina] Our readers are worried that the strike will put patients' lives in jeopardy.

[Kuznetsov] All provision has been made to ensure that this does not happen. Children's hospitals, polyclinics, and "emergency services" will not stop work, urgent operations will be performed, and seriously ill patients at hospitals will receive all the necessary treatment. Teams of experienced specialists will be on duty in polyclinics to ensure that no "emergency" patient is left without assistance [Kuznetsov ends].

Yesterday [24 January], following lengthy talks between M.M. Kuzmenko, chairman of the Union of Health Personnel Central Committee, and the government a compromise was proposed in order to avert the strike: As of 1 February medical personnel will have a partial pay raise with a view to this issue being rexamined in April. The RSFSR Supreme Soviet Committee is seeking a way of increasing the health service budget. Will the government's answer satisfy the medics or will the strike go ahead?

Moscow Medics Not To Participate

LD2501122592 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] The strikers' main demand is that allocations for public health must be increased. Trade union leaders have assured that during the strike ambulances and children's hospitals will not suspend work.

Moscow's Chief Medical Directorate told a TASS correspondent that a strike by Moscow medical workers has,

to date, not been planned. At any rate, no such reports had reached the directorate.

Government To Triple Miners' Minimum Wage

LD2401212192 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 24 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Today an agreement was reached between the independent trade union of coal industry workers and the Government of the Russian Federation. Beginning in January of this year the miners' minimum wage will be tripled.

Agricultural Development Results for 1991

LD2401165992 Moscow TASS in English 1657 GMT 24 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Igor Agabekov]

[Text] Moscow, January 24 (TASS)—According to an announcement of the Russian State Statistic Committee, the total volume of agricultural produce, including gross products, fell in the country by 5 per cent compared to 1990 and turned to be lower than the average yield the five past years.

The grain harvest amounted to 89.1 million tonnes, which is 15 per cent lower than the average level of the last 5 years and is 24 per cent down from 1990's figures. State grain purchases totalled 22.5 million tonnes last year, 34 per cent down from the 1990's level and the lowest amount in the past 25 years.

State sunflower purchases amounted to 1.7 million tonnes, 25 per cent less than in 1990, potatoes—4.7 million tonnes (6 per cent) and vegetables—4.4 million tonnes (28 per cent).

In 1991, the volume of oil seed supplies to the state was the lowest in the past 6 years, vegetables and potatoes—for 18 years.

The Russian economy and finance did not get stabilised either. In fact, the republican Gross National Product fell by 9 per cent.

A total of 750,000 apartments were built last year, which is 22 per cent less than in 1990. 10 million people (20 per cent of the whole population) need better living conditions.

Consumer goods production fell by 6 per cent, and food by 9 per cent, compared to the last year.

Between June and May in 1991, a family of four spent 310 roubles on each person to provide the minimal living standing, by the beginning of February 1992 the sum rose to 1300-1500 roubles.

The state had to pay a big share of its foreign debt both last and this year, which negatively affected foreign trade.

Journalist Interviews Rutskoy in Hospital

PM2701095992 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 24 Jan 92 p 3

[Vasiliy Izgarshev report under the rubric "Dealing with Rumors": "What Has Become of Rutskoy?"]

[Text] At the recent All-Army Officers' Assembly, notes saying "Why is General Rutskoy not with us?" flooded into the Presidium. Many readers have been calling PRAVDA to find out where the Russian vice president is, and what has become of him...

And here he is coming out of the hospital ward to meet me, wearing a track suit and with his hair combed tidily; he looks slimmer and younger.

"What are you talking about?" he says in answer to my observation about the benefit of a stay in the hospital "Who likes being in the hospital? You would not miss a hospital if you did not see one for a century. A hospital bed is something you would only wish on your worst enemy..."

One of our famous economists is visiting the vice president at the same time as me.

"Well, old fellow," Rutskoy says to him, "what is the situation as regards liberalization?"

"Daylight robbery."

Rutskoy was bitterly opposed to liberalization according to Gaydar's plan. He has not changed his position. I observe that he has all the same books in his ward as in his office. There are many newspapers here—KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, ARGUMENTY I FAKTY, ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, and our PRAVDA. On the table there is a typewriter. A pile of blank paper, some sketches and brief notes on separate pieces of paper strewn all over the table.

"I have gotten involved in journalism," Aleksandr Vladimirovich says. "It is an interesting occupation; various editorial offices in turn have been asking me to write something. How can you refuse? I have prepared some material for you, for PRAVDA. I will be pleased if you like it. If you publish it I will be doubly pleased."

The doctors did not give us much time to talk. But Rutskoy did not give in. There were many people who wanted to see him, and he did not refuse anyone, although the doctors understandably objected.

"Try as you may, old fellows, you will not leave without any lunch."

The day before, when agreeing to our meeting, he said, among other things, "I expect you around lunchtime, we can have a bite together and a little chat about everything..."

However, it was only the economist and I who had lunch. Rutskoy sat with us, having a cup of coffee. He was laughing.

"You see, after the treatment, the doctors have forbidden me to eat too much. And before the treatment too. So my figure is looking after itself."

We said good-bye, having partaken of the hospital broth and other delicacies, so to speak. Rutskoy accompanied us into the corridor and we embraced.

"Listen, you must promise that you will write about that economist and his work. The whole world knows that he is an expert. But he started off at the bottom before working his way into high-level science; he was a metalworker, an electrician, and now he heads an institute. And the main thing is that he is conscientious and honest."

The economist makes a dismissive gesture conveying there is nothing to get excited about.

And because personally I liked the man, I will leave the readers with a little mystery, and not give his name yet. However, I should not name him anyway. I intended to talk about Rutskoy—after all, all kinds of rumors are being circulated. And everything is all right with him, as I saw. He will go back to work soon. Admittedly, while he was kept firmly away from things there, some people found fault with his pointed and principled viewpoint as regards the reforms, but these have already made us quite simply poverty-stricken.

Burbulis at Labor Relations Commission Session

LD2601094392 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1800 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] The Russian Trilateral Commission for Settlement of Socio-Labor Relations [Rossiyskaya Trekhstoronnaya Kommissiya po Uregulirovaniya Sotsialno-Trudovykh Otnosheniy] has held its inaugural meeting. Gennadiy Burbulis called upon those present to contribute equally to the commission's work, and stressed that the current russian Government is not the kind to give in to unreasonable demands, no matter how insistently they are made. He said that the Commission members should not protect their own professional interests at the expense of other professions or of the reforms themselves.

The first deputy prime minister also expressed his belief that there is no group of people more interested today in upholding workers' rights than Boris Yeltsin's government.

Once the Commission is constituted by a Yeltsin decree, its members will have to prepare a draft republican law on contracts and collective agreements, a draft general labor contract, and work to avert and resolve labor disputes and conflicts.

First Deputy Chief Security Ministry Named

LD2501143992 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 2100 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] The appointment was announced today of Anatoliy Oleynikov as first deputy chief of the new Russian Security Ministry. Oleynikov held a similar post in the system of the former USSR KGB, having been appointed to the post during the reorganization of the former KGB which began after the failure of the August putsch.

I am stressing this fact because in one of our earlier programs Oleynikov was erroneously named as one of Kryuchkov's deputies. In fact, Oleynikov was never deputy chairman of the KGB under Kryuchkov.

'Democratic Reform' Leaders Hold Board Meeting

Cited on Current Situation

OW2501172692 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1356 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] **ALEKSANDR YAKOVLEV**

"The current situation in this country is virtually unpredictable, the cabinet of young ministers has got into a very difficult position being criticized by everybody, although, in my view, it should be given a chance", Mr. Aleksandr Yakovlev, a co-chairman of the Democratic Reform Movement, said on Saturday [25 January] to reporters in the wake of an extended meeting of the DRM [Democratic Reform Movement] board which was making preparations for the movement's first congress scheduled to begin on February 8 in Nizhniy Novgorod.

Asked by an IF [INTERFAX] correspondent about possible political developments in the country in the next six months, Mr. Yakovlev said a favorable outcome may be possible only if certain economic prerequisites were in place, when "not only food and consumer goods are marketable, but also means of production, housing, land and capital".

If Russia fails to turn trade and services over into private hands, to carry out a land reform and to introduce tight anti-trust legislation, the situation is bound to get worse, the former chief ideologist of Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroyka stressed

ACADEMICIAN PETRAKOV

Academician Nikolay Petrakov, a co-chairman of the DRM, criticized the Russian government's economic policy, speaking in Moscow at Saturday's DRM board

meeting. He believed the cabinet's words were not matched by its deeds since it promised a three-fold price increase with an abundance of goods before the liberalization began, while in reality prices skyrocketed, in Mr. Petrakov's assessment, by 6-10 times.

Land reform is being unnecessarily delayed, taxation policy needs substantial corrections and enterprises stepping up the production ought to be given nev incentives.

The current cabinet's major mistake is, in his view, that it has clearly underestimated the extent of the Soviet economy's monopolization. As it abolished the State Bank of the USSR (Gosbank) and took over the printing press, Russia turned into a cashier for the former Union republics. This situation, in his opinion, is a recipe for economic war. Describing the general economic situation, he said "the continuing collapse of the monetary system accompanied by an undiminished administrative control over property will result in fascism".

However, Mr. Petrakov, former adviser of president Gorbachev, did not support a demand that the government step down. It should be brought under the control of the democratic public opinion. "The Russian parliament's control is not enough, it is an arena for political games, and there is little democracy there", academician Petrakov said.

Cited on DRM Objectives

OW2501182692 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1516 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Leaders of the DRM [Democratic Reform Movement] have called for the maintenance of a common democratic space of the former Soviet Union. The cost of a breakup is too high, they said at a meeting with reporters after Saturday's [25 January] DRM board meeting in Moscow. Messrs Aleksandr Yakovlev and Vladimir Shostakovskiy defined the movement's main objectives which include the DRM's active participation in local elections, settlement of regional problems and drafting of an action program attractive for various groups of voters.

Mr. Yakovlev said the DRM was taking a positive approach "We do not intend to fight 'against', we fight 'for' - for real democracy, for freedom, for human rights". In his view, an average person in Russia has become more humiliated and has not received anything in return except for the right to speak out loud.

According to Mr. Shevardnadze, the movement should not stay in opposition, it should seek to start dialogue with all political parties, except for reactionary ones, but it does not intend to transform itself into a party under the circumstances. Speaking during a break about problems the democratic forces are facing, Mr. Shevardnadze cited as the most serious one "a feeling of some helplessness they get, trying to pull this huge state out of crisis and chaos".

Further Yakovlev Comments

LD2601040192 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 2110 GMT 25 Jan 92

["Highlights" of a news conference with leaders of the Democratic Reform Movement following a meeting of the movement in Moscow on 25 January; Aleksandr Yakovlev's comments are recorded in Russian fading into English reports]

[Excerpts] [Announcer] Although different people show different approaches to the organization known as the Democratic Reform Movement in Russia, many respect advice from its members and especially founding fathers. [passage omitted]

No wonder many journalists have gathered in the conference hall where the Movement's leaders were expected to offer their views of the social and economic situation in Russia. Aleksandr Yakovlev:

[Yakovlev] No one seriously expected perestroyka—or any radical change, for that matter—to gain ground easily and without mistakes. One system is replacing another in real life and not in somebody's brain, and this is the heart of the matter. I feel the Russian leaders, the Russian Government, and people who have undertaken this complicated business of perestroyka must be given a chance.

[Announcer] A reporter asked Aleksandr Yakovlev what was his vision of further change in the national economy.

[Yakovlev] Under the present conditions I would be glad if the means of production, land, stocks, and housing were transferred to market relations and could be bought and sold along with farm produce and industrial goods. In addition, this country needs an early and radical land reform and a reform under which retail trade will pass over into private hands and specific moves against monopoly in industrial production. Monopoly producers must be checked in their egoistic ambitions to dictate terms, said Aleksandr Yakovlev.

[Announcer] The republics of the new Commonwealth seem to have points of agreement, but Aleksandr Yakovlev hopes they will eventually join forces. Only, he said, the majority of people in these republics must realize what a dear price they are to pay for splits and secessions, and they must realize that there are leaders who attempt to use national democratic movements for their own ends. Another journalist asked Aleksandr Yakovlev whom the Democratic Reform Movement regarded as its political opponents and how it was going to fight them. The answer was it was high time people shifted accent from fight against to fight for.

[Yakovlev] The Democratic Reform Movement has no intention of fighting anyone, but I can tell you what it's

going to fight for. It is going to fight for democracy, freedom, and human rights. It must defend people's rights. It is working for and not against them.

[Announcer] Those were the highlights of a news conference with leaders of the Democratic Reform Movement of the Russian Federation.

Afanasyev Resigns From 'Democratic Russia'

LD2601165792 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 23 Jan 92

[Commentary by V. Vinogradov from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The Democratic Russia movement has held a news conference at the Moscow city soviet building. The reason for the news conference is significant. Yuriy Afanasyev has left the group and slammed the door behind him. It seems that up to 10 percent of his supporters will leave with him. The remaining leaders say the movement will not die, but will continue to play a noticeable role in political affairs.

Afanasyev has recently been trying to foist his extreme left-wing opinions of the government and the president on the movement, but the centrist line has prevailed. Yakunin, Zaslavskiy, Chernichenko, and others feel that, in the current situation, the government should be given a three-month period of trust to accomplish something.

Republican Party Statement Supports Government

LD2601055292 Moscow TASS in English 1504 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow January 25 TASS—The Republican Party of Russia has called on peoples of the Republic to support the cabinet headed by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and "to appreciate his determination to bring the country back to the community of civilized states."

The statement of the party received by TASS today says that it is full of resolve to support the government. Members of the Republican Party reject demands of the resignation of the government and advise the cabinet to "stick to the chosen course."

Socialist Party on Government 'Experiment'

LD2501041292 Moscow TASS in English 2202 GMT 23 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Krasulin]

[Text] Moscow January 23 TASS—The Russian Government programme is yet another experiment with unpredictable consequences, a co-chairperson of the Russia's Socialist Labour Party, Lyudmila Vartazarova, told a news conference in Moscow on Wednesday [22 January].

The country's leadership, just like the Ryzhkov and Pavlov governments, see their main task in patching holes in the state budget. Price liberalization when monopoly is in the hands of "producers of total deficit" will yield results contrary to those expected and trigger off slump in production, she said.

Vartazarova named a range of measures for the Russian Government to take but noted that her party is now unable to propose an economic programme of its own.

The Socialist Labour Party is not calling for the government to resign and regards it as the government's duty "to find a way out of the situation that has arisen".

The party's other co-chairman, historian Roy Medvedev, noted that all the movements within the former Communist party have now taken shape as independent party groups. The Socialist Labour Party is a middle-of-the-road party in this gamut. Of these groups now have a negative attitude toward what is happening in Russia, towards the policy of price hikes unaccompanied by measures to crete a regulated market economy. [sentence as received]

In this situation Medvedev does not rule out the possibility of joint actions.

As regards the party's organizational structure, Medvedev noted that the party had no one-man leadership. It approved the appointment of seven co-chairmen at its congress. This structure, according to Medvedev, will not only facilitate intra-party democracy but make party functionaries to think for themselves without awaiting instructions from above.

The news conference heard that the party has more than 50,000 members, mostly scientific and technical intellectuals. It is now seeking to attract workers and farmers as its members.

'Cosmos-2176' Launched From Plesetsk Cosmodrome

LD2401144992 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1351 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow, 24 Jan (TASS)—Another artificial Earth satellite, Cosmos-2176, intended for continuing space research, was launched today from the Plesetsk Cosmodrome by a Molniya booster rocket.

The satellite has been placed in an orbit with the following parameters:

Initial period of revolution, 11 hours 49 mins;

apogee, 39,342 km;

perigee, 613 km;

orbital inclination, 62.8 deg.

The apparatus is working normally.

'Progress M-11' Cargo Spacecraft Launched

LD2501153192 Moscow TASS in English 1508 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow January 25 TASS—To carry out the programme of space research, Russia launched a cargo spacecraft, Progress M-11, at 10:50 Moscow time on Saturday [25 January].

The spaceship, which will deliver cargo to the orbiting station Mir, was launched with the following parameters:

—Maximum distance from the surface of the earth—245 kilometers,
—Minimal distance from the surface of the earth—190 kilometers,
—Orbital period—88.6 minutes,
—Orbital inclination—51.6 degrees.

The flight is proceeding normally.

Docks With Mir

LD2701122392 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1030 GMT 27 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Rena Kuznetsova]

[Text] Moscow, 27 Jan (TASS)—At 1231 Moscow time today, the Progress M-11 cargo module docked with the Mir long-term orbital complex, TASS was told at the flight control center. On board Progress, which blasted off on 25 January, is everything that cosmonauts Aleksandr Volkov and Sergey Krikalev need for their work in orbit. They will begin unloading the module within the next few days.

The fuss surrounding the cargo module has, upon investigation, turned out to be groundless. There have been media reports of a strike planned by flight control staff which would have jeopardized the docking. Consequently, since morning we have been observing the preparations for this crucial orbital maneuver and the situation at the center. Everything went strictly according to schedule, TASS was assured by Deputy Flight Controller Viktor Blagov. In any event, they're not striking today at the flight control center.

Supreme Soviet

Parliament Holds Budget Session 24 Jan

Proceedings Detailed

LD2401215192

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 1820 GMT on 24 January broadcasts the "At the Russian Supreme Soviet Session" program of recorded highlights of the Russian Supreme Soviet proceedings at the Kremlin in Moscow on 24 January. Reception is good.

At 1823 GMT Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov announces that President Yeltsin is present at the meeting; the camera shows him seated at a separate desk on the platform. He is applauded briefly.

At 1824 GMT Yegor Gaydar, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, mounts the rostrum to present the budget. He summarizes some of the criticisms that have been made on inflation rates, and notes that the Republic will have to plan for conservative rate of inflation. The video briefly shows First Deputy Prime Minister Burbulis and Shaposhnikov, Commonwealth Armed Forces commander, who are present in the chamber. Gaydar elaborates on the problems of inflation and the risk of a slump, and notes that a harsh economic policy is therefore necessary. He lists some of the prerequisites for getting the economy straight, starting with cutting back military spending.

At 1834 GMT the announcer introduces the next excerpt from Gaydar's address, on revisions to the financing of foreign credits and aid; there will be no more charity from us in this field, he days. Gaydar moves on to spending on law and order, but also notes the need to compensate former political prisoners.

At 1837 GMT the announcer introduces a further excerpt from Gaydar's address, on spending for social provision and for the health service, and then spending on science.

At 1840 GMT Gaydar repeats that the budget is a harsh one. He enjoins Supreme Soviet deputies to bear in mind the risks of letting the situation get out of control in any further decisions they may make.

At 1841 GMT Gaydar answers questions from deputies.

At 1857 GMT Pochinok, chairman of the Budget Commission, delivers a co-report. The announcer presents recorded excerpts of his remarks: Pochinok emphasizes the need for interrepublic accords before a deficit-free budget can be assured.

At 1900 GMT Deputy Lokshin questions Pochinok about the government defaulting on grain purchase arrangements, and about the effect of taxes on farming equipment costs. Pochinok replies. Deputy Kuznetsov the questions Pochinok on the risk of the parliament being viewed as hindering reform, as some of the press has suggested.

At 1905 GMT Khasbulatov introduces a speech by Deputy Agafonov on the need to take rural reforms into account.

At 1907 GMT Deputy Vitebskiy speaks about military spending and the need for more funds for conversion.

At 1913 GMT Deputy Gasparyan speaks, wondering whether the budget is designed "for the regeneration or the degradation of Russia," deploring the poor financing of culture and the current "war of the media."

At 1915 GMT Deputy Vorobyev, head of the Armed Forces central finance directorate, speaks, thanking all concerned for showing understanding of the special needs of the Armed Forces. For their part, they have pared their requirements to the bone, he notes.

At 1916 GMT Deputy Krasavchenko speaks, lamenting the fate of the "500 Days" program, and warning of the need to demonstrate maximum resolve and a carefully-weighed approach now that we are effectively starting the process again from scratch.

At 1918 GMT Deputy Zadonskiy speaks. There are only two ways, he says: either we hand over all money and all powers of government to the Army, or we go the democratic way. The latter entails supporting the government, even though there have been some inconsistencies in its behavior of late, he says.

At 1919 GMT the announcer says that after a tense debate, the budget was adopted first "as a basis," and that Khasbulatov then asked for a vote on the budget resolution "as a whole." The scoreboard shows the results of the vote as: 161 for, 15 against, and 7 abstentions. Khasbulatov then makes concluding remarks, asking deputies to consider the experience of such foreign countries as Lithuania, Romania, and Finland in economic and budgetary affairs. These are serious matters, he reminds deputies.

The program ends at 1925 GMT.

Gaydar Presents Budget

LD2401225992 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1820 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Report on budget message address by Yegor Gaydar, Russian Federation deputy prime minister, to the Russian Supreme Soviet in Moscow on 24 January; from the "At the Russian Supreme Soviet Session" program—recorded]

[Text] [Gaydar] Esteemed people's deputies, copies of the president's budget message have been distributed to you. It has been discussed by committees and commissions. Quite a few criticisms have been formulated that must be borne in mind when adopting a final decision on budget policy. Permit me to dwell, first and foremost, on the pivotal aspects of economic policy which lie behind the specific figures and calculations before you.

First and foremost, I would like to talk about the problems which emerged during the discussions in the committees and commissions, the ones which were most actively discussed during our work and the criticisms and reproaches, which were often justified, levelled at the government. The first are technical. They are connected with the conditional nature of the evaluations of price dynamics and rates of inflation which were incorporated in the draft budget submitted to you. Yes, we acknowledge this criticism. In contemporary economic and political practice, in contemporary economic theory, there are no reliable ways of predicting the rate of inflation in a given situation. At the moment, it is especially difficult to do this because of the price intentions actually signalled by enterprises in their proposals, in prices proposed at the beginning of January. Although these intentions have not yet hardened into actual prices, they presuppose a level of inflation of 1,000-1,200 percent for the next quarter.

Simple macroeconomic calculations show that the domestic market cannot absorb such rates of inflation. The public is not prepared to pay 10 times more for a car. The public does not have the money to pay for consumer goods at the greatly increased prices being proposed by industry. The public does not have sufficient income to afford the proposed rate of increase in prices for light industrial goods. Industry lacks the income to absorb the proposed rate of increase in the cost of manufacturing inputs.

But, if today we incorporate relatively high rates of inflation in the budget, we are automatically endorsing these rates of inflation. That is exactly why we were forced to incorporate relatively conservative assessments of inflation in our budget calculations, in the region of 400 percent, in order to bring budget revenue and expenditure into conformity with the dynamics of production as they are actually developing, with the dynamics of prices.

I think any other policy will be extremely dangerous because it would doom us to an automatic escalation of the inflationary spiral.

[Correspondent] The minister went on to explain the reasons for the present economic situation. He cited facts to show that the collapse began decades ago. This did not give the impression of being a history lecture, since an illness cannot be treated unless its causes are understood.

[Gaydar] Despite measures taken during the year to reduce spending, the overall budget deficit actually came to 108.4 billion rubles. The very limited stabilizing effect of the April price increases had exhausted itself completely by the second half of 1991. The rate of growth in the money supply increased sharply. Purely technical problems with the printing of money came on top of other difficulties. Delays in paying wages became chronic. An acute crisis came to a head in the circulation of cash. Average monthly rates of increase in wholesale prices passed the 10 percent mark. This showed that we had run right into extremely high inflation.

As predicted, the country found itself facing an extremely difficult choice only six months after Pavlov's price increases. It could opt for yet another sharp increase in prices imposed from above, this time not two-fold but three- or four-fold. This would make it possible to moderate the financial crisis for a few months but would offer no grounds whatsoever for hoping that the shortage of commodities would be eased. The other alternative was an immediate deregulation of prices,

which would make it possible to have confidence in the ruble, gradually reduce the deficit, and create at least the minimum requirements for launching a market economy.

The severity of the financial and economic crisis and the rate of its development made it impossible to put off a decision, to wait for ideal conditions for the operation of market regulators—developed private structures, a demonopolized economy and a stable, convertible currency—to emerge from somewhere, at a wave of the price wand. We are convinced that the choice of the second option was the only decision that was possible and responsible under the circumstances.

Given the continued existence of major financial imbalances, the main risk stemming from the deregulation of prices was the possibility of rapid development of hyperinflation, a situation in which the annual rate of price increases exceeds 12,000 percent and monetary circulation basically breaks down. By attempting to forestall such a development of events, we could very easily find ourselves once again amid the familiar ruins of a virtually uncontrollable barter economy, in which all talk of developing entrepreneurship and stimulating capital investment, of scientific and technical progress and restructured production would be unprofessional and irresponsible. In such a situation we would be condemned to a continuing and accelerating fall in production.

When analyzing trends in the most important sectors of the national economy and prospects for their development, it is not difficult to see that the primary reason for a fall in production would be a further, progressive collapse of economic ties.

In this predicament we are basically left with just one rigidly fixed option for stabilizing the situation, that of putting a sharp brake on the rate of growth of the amount of available money and to counter the mounting avalanche of hyperinflation with a very strict financial and monetary policy. That is the only way the economy can be stabilized. It is the only way the preconditions for the normal functioning of material production can be created. If this task is not met any individual measures to boost specific industries will inevitably be swept aside by a wave of general financial chaos.

What can be done to radically rectify financial disproprtions on the scale of those that emerged in 1991? We have carried out a full inventory of the possibilities that exist in this area. To depart a bit from purely financial jargon and to describe what we are proposing to do in general political terms, it boils down to this:

We are proposing a sharp contraction of the sphere of the state economy, state responsibility for the functioning of the economy, state procurements and state financing. We are proposing that the government be relieved of everything that it physically cannot provide today.

At the same time, having defined the level of state spending and the size of the state economy that inevitably and necessarily we are going to have to preserve, we need to back up this spending with healthy and noninflationary revenues.

How can this be done? The first precondition is a very sharp revision of all the main items of expenditure in the budget. Here we were forced primarily to turn to the items of expenditure that for many years burdened our economy and for many years made it impossible for it to be placed on a civilian footing. I refer to defense spending. Of course, the sharp reduction in defense spending enshrined in the draft budget that is being proposed to you does not signify that we can allow ourselves to neglect those who have thrown in their lot with military service. We must protect these above all.

In the budget, we propose maintaining the level of financing for expenditure on servicemen's wages which has been formed. Increasing these allocations, taking into account the decisions to increase wages in October and January of this year, we are maintaining expenditure on their monetary allowance and on their material allowance. We are primarily directing capital investment in the defense sector to the construction of housing for officers.

[Correspondent] Like a housewife gathering all her pennies that at some time have rolled into the cracks, Yegor Gaydar reported on reserves of savings. First, there is the military industrial complex. The speaker stressed the need to keep scientific, engineering, and technical cadres. Arms purchases will be reduced by a factor of seven and one-half. Among other sources of savings are:

[Gaydar, in progress] ...expenditure on credits granted to foreign states and gratuitous aid. This area also was mentioned on more than one occasion during the discussion of budgetary problems over recent years. Now we have carried out a very strict revision of everything we allocate in these areas. We have adopted a decision to suspend the implementation of any project that does not provide for and does not yield an immediate and guaranteed return and that we simply can suspend physically at the same time, because you know, the suspension itself of projects already being implemented demands quite substantial expenditures.

Proceeding from this, total expenditure on credits and aid comprises one percent of the gross national product. The overwhelming proportion of them are credits to those states that are reliably fulfilling all their obligations to us with regard to the repayment of debt and to the payment of interest, supplying us with necessary foodstuffs or settling with hard currency. Today we have stopped engaging in charity in this sphere. Here also there are substantially no additional resources or savings of funds from a macroeconomic point of view.

On top of the other areas of expenditure, one also can single out two areas of expenditure from what one basically would wish to reduce and from what potentially

can be reduced. They are expenditure on management, by 0.6 percent of the GNP, and expenditure on the maintenance of the law enforcement bodies, by 1.1 percent of the GNP. Probably, in the course of time we will be able to progress further in the reduction of this expenditure. I think we will be able to put our administrative apparatus in order. I think that we will be able to relieve our economy of such a burden with regard to the maintenance of the law enforcement bodies.

At the same time, when we examine closely the short-term reserves available today we come to the conclusion that here it would be simply impossible to remove anything else today. Yes, we did have inflated expenditure on maintaining the political police. Yes, it is beyond any doubt that cuts have to be made, but at the same time we had a glaring under-financing of some of the most important areas of expenditure within that sector concerned with observance of elementary human rights, and that includes the rights of political prisoners. Additional resources will need to be allocated to this.

[Correspondent] The speaker remarked on the inflated nature of the bureaucratic apparatus, but made the point also that over many years the government made no additional payments to personnel in the law enforcement bodies, and that this has led to an exodus of qualified staff, so that here, too, there are no reserves where savings can be made.

[Gaydar] Then there are the spheres where it is not actually our aim to make savings. These are, first and foremost, the socio-cultural sphere, health care, education, culture, and science. We are obliged to limit spending in these spheres in line with real budget revenue. Our general line here has been as follows: We have attempted to maintain the level of financing as it stands. We propose to adjust the financing of those areas in light of changing price levels, but it must be firmly understood that in circumstances in which Russia's GNP last year fell by 11 percent, in which forecasts show that the GNP [words indistinct] this quarter is set to fall back by about a further 19 percent, to reckon on it being possible seriously to increase allocations in real terms, albeit for just one major sector, is to delude oneself. The maximum that can be done, for the top priority sectors, is to maintain volumes of financing at approximately their previous levels.

I do not rule out that, within a relatively short time, it may become clear that we need to make additional serious efforts aimed at restructuring the whole system of running and financing health care. I do not rule out the possibility of it becoming clear that the existing forms and scales of state support for that sphere are not effective, that we need to concentrate on targeting support for the needy while at the same time making a substantial increase in the contribution of the commercial medical sector. In this we should, and are obliged to operate in accordance with budgetary and financial realities, our real capabilities, and also with making the most effective possible use of those capabilities.

As far as science is concerned, we are proposing that financing of science be included in the budget at 1 percent of the GNP. Aside from that, I wish to draw your attention to the fact that an additional fund for financing scientific research work is being set up. The resources are to come from 1.5-percent contributions based on costs [za schet otchisleniy ot sebestoimosti v razmere polutora protsentov]. The fund can and will be used to finance the most important applied work and to provide the financial backing for it. So the budget does not mean a drastic, wholesale reduction of spending on science, which people have been discussing constantly and repeatedly.

Overall, today's budget is extremely tight and extremely conservative. I am convinced that there are no substantial additional sources for mobilizing revenues or for reducing spending. So in discussing any additional allocations or proposals for reducing taxes or increasing spending, we are at the same time discussing proposals which will increase the risk of uncontrolled developments in the situation and a financial and economic catastrophe. I would like to stress this again and again. I would also like to ask people's deputies to take this into account in making their decisions and to support our main budget guidelines.

Gaydar Warns of Dependence on West

OW2401171692 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1609 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] As he addressed the Russian Parliament upon the end of budget debates, Vice-Premier Yegor Gaydar warned that Russia depended on Western grain credits. The credits had been granted by the G7 [Group of Seven] nations after deferring Russia's foreign debt payments until March 1992. Gaydar said that the payments were deferred on the condition of cooperation with the IMF in control of economic reforms in Russia.

Gaydar said that in March the IMF would make public its analysis of reforms in Russia from the point of view of consistency in the liberalization of prices and in eliminating the budget deficit.

Gaydar warned that if the government's actions along these lines were found unsatisfactory, the G7 nations would cancel its previous decision to defer Russia's debt payments. Gaydar said that in that case Russia would run out of grain already in the spring and its live-stock fareing would be ruined.

Gaydar Answers Questions

LD2501090992 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1841 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Question-and-answer session with Yegor Gaydar, Russian deputy prime minister for economic affairs, and Russian Supreme Soviet deputies, moderated by Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov in the

Kremlin in Moscow on 24 January; from the "At the Russian Supreme Soviet Session" program—recorded]

[Text] [Khasbulatov] Go ahead at microphone No. 1, please.

[Deputy Peruanskiy] Deputy Peruanskiy from Kazan. I have a question about the government's tax policies regarding the republics within the Union, within the Russian Federation. In the past, one of the stumbling blocks in relations between the Union center and the republics was the question of taxation. The Union center tried to gather everything into its own hands and then redistribute it equally among all the republics. The republics wanted strictly defined amounts to be contributed to the Union budget, for defense, space, and so on. Won't the Russian Government be tempted to become the successor-in-law to the Union government? What is the republican government's tax policy regarding the republics within the Russian Federation? Thank you.

[Gaydar] The Government of the Russian Federation is certainly not tempted to do any such thing, especially as everybody can see the results of the Union center's policies. By the way, these results cut both ways; the republics' response was to set clearly defined contributions to the funding of the Union's outlays. Given high inflation, this automatically led to the collapse of the Union budget.

Our policy on this is extremely simple, and it conforms to the stipulations of the law. Our strategic objective is to distribute the revenue we receive from sources of finance around the administrative tier and to do so in an efficient manner.

[Khasbulatov] Right, microphone No. 2. Deputies, please ask just one question each.

[Deputy Poptsov] Esteemed Yegor Timurovich, I would like to know whether the budget you have presented takes into account the proposals and results of the discussion of this budget in Supreme Soviet committees. The media committee spent two days discussing the draft, but not a single comma has been changed in the budget as a result of these criticisms.

[Gaydar] The final draft of the budget was submitted to the Supreme Soviet's Planning and Budget Commission after it had been discussed by all the other committees and commissions. The main thrust of these criticisms is reflected in the following minute, which states that the Ministry of Economics and Finance is instructed to return to the whole range of questions raised by the commissions by February—and I remind you that February is only a few days away. Bearing in mind the actual movement of prices and incomes, a request has been made to assess whether additional funds are needed for extremely important expenditure items discussed by committees and commissions and whether such funds can be released. I agree with this arrangement, and that is how we plan to proceed.

[Khasbulatov] Go ahead at microphone No. 3, please.

[Unidentified deputy] [name indistinct], Constituency No. (?20), Kabardino-Balkaria. Yesterday the President of Russia announced on television that nobody had any intention of demolishing collective and state farms. I personally would very much like to believe this, and I do believe it. But we have just received the budget for the first quarter. You have, in effect, forgotten that there are collective and state farms, and I have a question for you in this regard. Machinery is getting more and more expensive. On the average—I have here a telegram from our local agricultural supply body—it is getting more expensive by 50 to 70 times on average.

Tell me, please, can we force you—our main customer—or townspeople to buy a liter of milk for 60-70 rubles [R]? How can we do that? That is one question. The second: What is the principle behind the distribution of subsidies among the territories? I would very much like to receive brief replies to these questions.

[Gaydar] I understand the problem. There are no prices for agricultural machinery as yet. Without a doubt we will not be able to force townspeople to buy milk for R50-60 per liter without spurring inflation. If we do that, they will be paying R50, and R500, and R5,000.

Taking into account the telegrams you have in your hands, if today we were to incorporate into the budget allocations for the agro-industrial complex, funds for the purchase of all these goods at these prices—at which nobody would ever buy them, without a doubt—they simply would not buy them, even if we incorporated these funds; this money does not exist, not on the farms nor in the economy as a whole. They will be forced to reduce their prices. At present nothing but outlays is incorporated there. If we incorporate these outlays into the budget, I can assure you that townspeople will soon truly be buying milk at R50, R500, and R5,000.

[Deputy] The second question?

[Gaydar] Yes, the subsidies. What are subsidies? Up to now we have continued to use regulating taxes, value-added tax [VAT] as a regulating tax, and we made provision for subsidies only for those regions where it was impossible to regulate the minimum necessary volume of expenditure (?laid down in kind) on the basis of maneuvers with the VAT, or where the share of the VAT in a region was less than zero. In those places we were forced to allocate specific subsidies from the budget. They are calculated by direct accounting, on the basis of directing expenditure, covered by the corresponding budget. As you have seen, this is mainly done in national regions in extreme circumstances.

[Chelnokov] Thank you. Chelnokov, from Constituency No. 16. Ruslan Imranovich, may I ask two questions? Thank you. Yegor Timurovich, my first question: How is it proposed to finance catering in hospitals, taking into account the increase in food prices, in prices for food and medicines? As I understand it, there is now a tendency to

shift this expenditure to the local level, yet at the local level they have no funds for this.

My second question: According to page 5 of our draft law on the budget system, expenditures on the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet total R78.6 million; expenditures on the presidential administration R103.7 million; and expenditures on ministries, departments, and the rest to R3.002 billion. I would like to ask you to provide a more detailed breakdown of spending on ministries and departments and on the presidential administration, especially since there is great dissatisfaction over the way the presidential administration works. I propose that, until that detailed breakdown is provided, the budget should not be endorsed. Thank you.

[Gaydar] The problem of financing spending on food in the health care sector is a very serious one. The Ministry of Health is now working on it with the Ministry of Finance. A proposal has been made, which we wholly support, for budget allocations here to be redirected from overall financing of spending on food in hospitals to targeting of food directly to specific, let us say to specific patients, and primarily to the less well off.

I will say it again—I am obliged to stress this point—that we will really be forced to make a serious review of the forms of social support in the health care sphere in light of the real capabilities of our budget. As for expenditures on the presidential, government, and Supreme Soviet administration, those figures should have been provided...[changes thought] have been provided to the committees and commissions.

[Nikulin] Nikulin from territorial Constituency No. 367, of the Chamber of the Republic. Yegor Timurovich, you have remarked that no more cuts can be made in law enforcement bodies, that all possible cuts there have already been made. But you are perfectly well aware that under that heading there are other services; it is debatable whether these other services could really be described as law enforcement bodies.

The most disastrous situation of all is affecting the border troops. Out of the R3 billion requested for them, they are being allocated R920 [million]. But they need R1 billion for payroll alone. So I would ask you to find the means to finance the border troops—not including the Ukraine, which is financed—for the first quarter. I would like to take advantage of the presence here of the president to ask that on 14 February the question of financing border troops by other republics be resolved. But the first quarter needs to be financed, not including the Ukraine. That money has to be found. Our border is collapsing, and that applies to whole border districts. That is the first question.

And now the second question: R20 million in foreign currency was left in foreign intelligence accounts, frozen by the Bank for Foreign Economic Activity. Foreign intelligence has now made the decision to halve its apparatus abroad. It is not just a question of paying salaries; there is nothing for people to survive on. So please resolve this matter and bring these people in the apparatus abroad back to Russia.

[Gaydar] Well, on both....[changes thought] There is actually money in the budget for the border service, which means that if we finance it for the whole of the border of the Soviet Union [as heard]—with the exception of the Ukraine, which is taking care of itself—if by that time we have not managed to reach agreement with the other republics—I think we will manage to reach an agreement—but in any case we will make the finances available. As for the R20 million; well, the main problem there is not that the cash is frozen but the absence of liquid assets of any kind at the Bank for Foreign Economic Activity. We are therefore obliged to make decisions now on a day-by-day basis; in other words, depending on how cash comes in during the course of each day. But there is no question that this problem has to be resolved, and we will resolve it.

[Khasbulatov] I would like to tell deputies that the deputy commander in chief in charge of armaments, the deputy commander in chief in charge of construction, the head of the central financial directorate of the supreme command of the Armed Forces, and the head of the organizational and planning directorate for major construction are present in the hall. You have already heard the graphic words of the minister, Yevgeniy Ivanovich Shaposhnikov. Therefore, yesterday [23 January] and the day before yesterday, I asked the deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet to coordinate everything that the Armed Forces need. If any problems arise, these questions should be explained to the Supreme Soviet by professionals. Agreed? Right, microphone No. 3.

[Deputy Yakunin] Gleb Yakunin, representing national territorial constituency No. 11. Esteemed deputy prime minister, I have two questions. My first question is this. Given the absence of any mention in the Union budget, how are the efforts to maintain Lenin's embalmed corpse in an impressive and exemplary condition funded? Is it coming out of the president's budget? How much does it cost Russia? [commotion in hall] That is the first question. The second question is a more serious one. All deputies have just received a copy of the draft Supreme Soviet decision on arrangements for regulating prices of goods produced by various sectors, in particular point 1, which proposes the abolition of the value-added tax on a number of foods. We are all concerned for the welfare of our electors. Prices are indeed very high. But as all of us know, we are poised on the brink of terrible hyperinflation which will cause a great social explosion. Therefore, we regard every million, every billion, as precious. What impact will the adoption of this decision have? We have acquainted ourselves with it. It contains very many hidden problems. What will this draft cost? Won't it deal us a fatal blow, especially where your budget is concerned?

[Gaydar] As far as the first question is concerned, I am not prepared to tell you how much the upkeep of the mausoleum costs. But I can assure you that, measured on

the macro-economic scale, it is insignificant. Our financial situation cannot be rectified in this way.

[Yeltsin] It is not financed by the president.

[Gaydar, laughing] The president assures us that it does not come out of his budget. The second question does have very serious macro-economic significance. A substantial reduction in the value-added tax on specific, very important consumer commodities could, in my view, completely upset the financial system and flatten the first signs of stabilization in the consumer market, signs which began to emerge during the last week.

[Khasbulatov] Right, go ahead...

[Gaydar, interrupting] This is...

[Khasbulatov, interrupting] Excuse me. Did you have another question? Is that all? Go ahead at microphone No. 4, please.

[Deputy (Chivisov)] Deputy (Chivisov) of the Youth Affairs Committee. Esteemed Yegor Timurovich, and I would ask President Nikolayevich to pay attention to this, too. This is my question: What is to be done with the population's monetary savings? Are they to be indexed? When and using what formula? That is my first question. And my second question is this. Article 11 of the budget message says that, with the aim of further expanding the rights and duties of the organs of power of the republic and local organs, expenditure is being transferred to these organs for the upkeep of territorial organs of the Ministry of Ecology, the State Committee for Anti-Monopoly Policy, and the inspectorate of the Ministry of Trade. What independence can these inspectorates possibly have and what antimonopoly policy can there be if they are to be financed from local budgets?

[Gaydar] On the first question, on the population's savings. The situation is this. At present, no decisions have been taken on indexing the population's savings. The government is doing this quite deliberately for the reason that today we must tackle the task of bringing the volume of the money supply into line with the current volume of production and current monetary flows. If, right from the start, we set ourselves conditions within which it is impossible to resolve this task and the money supply is never brought into line with the real monetary requirement, then this will, on its own, be a wonderful, automatic mechanism for creating tomorrow's hyperinflation. We are prepared, however, to return to the question of indexing savings in light of the results of the first quarter, when the real level of inflation and the real possibilities of the budget become clear.

On the second question on the transfer of bodies to local areas: Here we are faced with very unpleasant alternatives. On the one hand, we want to unload as much as possible from the republican budget and we want to transfer as much income and expenditure as posible to the local regions. On the other hand, indeed it is quite true that the transfer of resources to the local regions in these areas of expenditure is a potential... could be a factor which will restrict the effectiveness of the centralized administration of these systems. Here, evidently there is no ideal decision, and we have to seek compromises. We are seeking them by weighing up which services, in the first place, it is most important to continue to finance from the republic budget. We determined that we will finance from the republican budget, with very small expenditures, the ecological inspectorate and, naturally, the law enforcement organs. In principle, if the Supreme Soviet considers it necessary to expand the range of monitoring services which should be financed from the state budget, from the republican budget, we will not object to this at all.

Deputy Discusses Military Economics

LD2501135492 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1907 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Remarks by Deputy Vitebskiy at 24 January session of Russian Supreme Soviet held in Moscow on military spending—recorded]

[Text] Esteemed comrade deputies, esteemed Presidium. The commission set up specially by the Presidium carefully assessed all the documents which were presented, together with the budget message on questions of financing defense expenditure and the military-industrial complex. Permit me to dwell on some aspects of our conclusions.

First, I must say that in the main we are in agreement with the conclusions which Aleksandr Petrovich Pochinok spoke about, and I shall touch only on those aspects which were not sufficiently fully reflected by him.

The first question. The commission considers it possible to agree with the proposed draft expenditure for the upkeep of the Army, and until yesterday considered it possible to agree with the proposed expenditure on research and development work. Unfortunately, yesterday in the final version, expenditure on research and development work was reduced by a further 50 percent which led to yet another catastrophe within this budget.

It is no secret that last year expenditure on research and development work was reduced by 23 percent. A further reduction of 16-19 percent was planned for this year. Over half of this has already been implemented. As a result we—I am not going to speak about scientific-technical and all the defense consequences which stem from this, I shall dwell only on the social aspect. We are leaving over 500,000 scientific personnel without work in the first quarter, mainly in such cities as Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Yekaterinburg, and I do not think that I need to tell you what social consequences this will cause.

How can we extricate ourselves from this situation on this specific question? Evidently, I do not intend to ask for any additional allocations today, but I shall simply propose this solution: Evidently the Government should

speed up work on concluding an agreement with the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] on joint financing. The 8 billion rubles [R] which is to be received from the CIS states to support the military budget should be used in the first instance to make up for the R4.5 billion removed from financing research and development work. Otherwise—well, as I say, there is no need to describe all the consequences here.

The next question on which we absolutely disagree is the question of financing purchases. It is not a question of whether arms purchases should be reduced. I believe there is no disagreement on this, and hardly anyone here would dispute this thesis. The point is that this reduction should proceed sensibly within the framework of at least elementary logic. If we propose, as the presented document has proposed, to reduce these purchases by an average of 50 percent over the year, then it would be logical to suppose that this 50 percent should present a quarterly timetable of uniform reductions of 20 and then 30 percent and so on, so as to reach an average of 50 percent.

This reduction, even though in itself it presents colossal difficulties for the national economy, nonetheless it can be implemented in some way. If the reductions proceed in this way then those arguments which Yegor Timurovich put forward on a macro- economic level—about the possibility of some sort of sensible conversion—become viable.

But these arguments do not have any role and cannot be accepted within the framework of the two remaining months of the first quarter, in which there can be no question of even the smallest realistic conversion programs. The proposed immediate 80-percent plummet will cause consequences which I have already had occasion to mention. But the main thing is that it will make it impossible to fulfil the tasks which we wish to set the defense complex.

What specifically are we proposing? In the first place the 10 billion [rubles], which is bashfully written into the draft budget for financing the conversion programs, should be described directly and frankly as money to finance the expenditures connected with conversion. We will not be financing any programs with this 10 billion because it is not enough even for the wages of those who remain without wages as a result of this plummeting reduction.

Second, an article or something similar must be immediately included containing specific instructions to the Industrial Ministry and the Armed Forces to adopt specific instructions for each enterprise subjected to this plummeting reduction, possibly even with Parliamentary monitoring for the main enterprises. By the way, Yegor Timurovich spoke about this, but it must be reflected in the law. It may be to the advantage of a particular enterprise to continue and take off the stocks, to complete the products which are already there, or else really to use this money for compensation. That is, this should be done not by shock methods but under strict control.

And second [as heard], the draft presented by the president quite rightly says—I am just finishing—that for these aims what is needed is not 10 billion but 20 billion, but that they had not been able to find the second 10 million in the budget. We propose that this 10 billion should be written into the law as a loan from the State Bank, with a guarantee that it will be repaid by industry in the third and fourth quarter of this year. This will make it possible to bring the conversion process within a normal framework, to obtain something from it, and not to eliminate the defense complex, which the proposed budget is in effect aiming at.

Khasbulatov Assesses Gaydar Speech

LD2501120792 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1920 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Concluding remarks by Russian Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslam Imranovich Khasbulatov at 24 January session of Russian Supreme Soviet in Moscow—recorded]

[Text] Now let me have my say for just one or two minutes, or I will not be able to get to sleep. Yegor Timurovich [Gaydar], esteemed Yegor Timurovich, we, and particularly I as chairman and leader of parliament, again draw your attention to the need for a very critical assessment of what is being said here. Of course, quite frankly what you said in conclusion must have lost you 30 or 40 votes of people who had wanted to vote for you, without any pressure on my part. That is because you said you can only agree to one thing and you drew attention to a fairly nonessential factor. The person in charge of the economy and a leader of the government should of course never under any circumstances make this sort of statement, even from purely tactical considerations. This is particularly true in that almost everything that was said here stems regrettably, it can be said, from real economic life.

Let us take Lithuania. Surely none of us has any doubts to the effect that Lithuania is any less a supporter than our government of switching its economy to market relations and creating a classic market. But why not ask yourself why they are retaining procurement prices and retail prices at a third of our levels? There is a very simple reason. Prices become excessive, and when prices become excessive all interest in expanding production is lost. All interest. There are optimum levels of some kind. We probably cannot of course set some kind of formula between high and low prices. Where is the mean level when it is very advantageous? It sometimes happens that unrestrained increases in prices produce a result that is even worse than keeping them at a low level by decree. That is also not in our experience, so to speak. I do not know—we should not view this whole business in excessively primitive terms.

Then there were your assertions about the International Monetary Fund. They produce a skeptical smile, as it were, from those who know a little about this. The case of Romania is an interesting one. Was it all that democratic a country when it joined the IMF? That is not the point. These gentlemen were here, and they are in no way demanding that prices of agricultural produce should be completely released.

Take Finland. What is the situation there? Uncontrolled prices for agricultural produce? Thirty-three percent of the Common Market budget goes to regulating agriculture. You know this, just as I do. Say what what you will, but we did graduate from the same university faculty. And there is much more. It was an oversimplified view, I must say. It was not echoed here. It did not find an appropriate response. So I am compelled to repeat once again: We support the Government, but you have to know that our assessments are of course fairly skeptical. Here you again have the most substantial support, and an opportunity to implement all your—or rather our—market reforms.

Here in Parliament no one is objecting. Well, perhaps there are some objections. But at any rate, a decisive number of deputies, at least 90 percent, want all the economic reforms implemented. Our criticism is not designed to put a brake on things, but to encourage you to implement these reforms as rapidly, energetically, and effectively as possible. Do you want foreign economic relations liberalized? It would be better for us to be given the relevant draft law, and we would adopt a more liberal law than the presidential decree. You want free trade? We have provided a draft law on free trade. We shall steer any liberal law through this Parliament. Tell us, please, where we have applied the brakes or shown any kind of reactionary sentiment. Give us just one instance. There are no such examples. Why not? It is no coincidence, because we all now understand that there is no additional Supreme Soviet acting as a superstructure, there is nobody for us to fight; responsibility rests with us, together with you; there is no alternative, and marketeers and anti-marketeers alike all realize that there is no alternative.

Therefore, we all know that we need to move more quickly. Of course, we might have different methods and views. But you should not consider that you have opponents here; there is nobody here that you have to fight. If you fight us, you might crush us, but the next day you will pass into non-existence, and not just you; there is no knowing what will happen to this country. You must understand this. There is a kind of equilibrium now. If you topple one pillar, so to speak, the whole thing might collapse. You have to understand not only your own personal interests, but something else. I beg the forgiveness of the members of the Supreme Soviet, but I simply had to say this, as it is such a serious discussion. Thank you.

Further on Supreme Soviet Budget Debate

Khasbulatov Urges Support

OW2401175192 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1609 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Parliament of Russia has adopted the country's budget for the first three months of 1992. All basic parameters have remained unchanged. Several amendments were made, including the permission to the central bank to give a credit of 10 billion roubles to finance the government's program for the conversion of defence industries.

The Russian parliament's leader Ruslan Khasbulatov called for voting in support of the draft saying that the "members of the government would be only glad to resign to blame the parliament for all misfortunes, which would upset stability in society". Khasbulatov recalled that parliament would have to discuss the budget already next month again.

Documentation Quality Criticized

LD2401152392 Moscow TASS in English 1158 GMT 24 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow January 24 TASS—Parliament committees and commissions are prepared to allow the government to spend 519.8 billion roubles, but oppose the endorsement of a draft government budget for the first quarter of this year, Aleksandr Pochinok, chairman of the Commission for Budgets, Plans, Taxes and Prices, told the Russian Parliament today.

The "quality and level of submitted documents are insufficient to call them a budget", Pochinok said.

They do not contain full details of state income and spending, domestic debt repayment programmes and do not mention balances of payments of non-budgetary funds—the Social Protection Fund, the Conversion and Pension Funds, he said.

In order to eliminate the budget deficit, "industries, political stability, the Army and people's living standards" are put in jeopardy, he stressed. The Russian Government cannot pursue a coordinated financial policy in all territories that use roubles, he added.

The government's idea to achieve a deficit-free budget without corresponding inter-republican agreements is a fiction, he said, pointing to the danger of monetary and crediting expansion by other republics.

Pochinok also blasted the attempt "to place the responsibility for living standards on local budgets". "The government, voluntarily or not, is promoting disintegration and regionalisation in Russia," he said.

He urged the government to continue working on the annual and first quarter budget, saying that the reviewed budget for the first quarter should be submitted to the Parliament in February.

Gaydar: Draft 'Too Optimistic'

LD2401222992 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 2137 GMT 24 Jan 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Vice President Yegor Gaydar of the Russian Federation admitted that the indices of the state revenues implied in the draft law on the state budget for the first quarter of 1992 were too optimistic. In his final speech on January 24 at the session of the Russian Supreme Soviet Gaydar refuted the criticism on the part of the deputies that the government seemed to be obsessed with the idea of eliminating the budget deficit. Rounding up the discussion of the draft, Gaydar emphasized that the elimination of the budget deficit was the condition of the deferment of the foreign debt interests repayment, set by the International Money [as recieved] Fund. The deadline for the repayment of interests expires this March and the issue is to be specially considered by the fund.

According to Gaydar, the negative solution of the IMF would mean immediate suspension of daily unloading of 120-130 thousand tons of imported grain, which would leave the population without bread and the live-stock without fodder. It would take some time for the Western bureaucrats to realize the effects of such policy for the rest of the world. Meanwhile, there would remain no government or a parliament in Russia, said Gaydar. According to the Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov, the statement of the Vice President only gave a new impetus to the parliamentary opposition and lost 40- 50 votes of patriotically minded deputies. However, after sharp criticism of the documents submitted by the government and even after a second voting, the Russian Supreme Soviet adopted the law on the state budget of the Russian Federation for the first quarter of 1992 and decreed to put the law into force. The law takes into account the draft budget submitted by the government and permits it to spend the resources worth 420 billion rubles.

The decree stated that the draft budget was unsatisfactory and, therefore, another report of the current budget indices should be submitted for the consideration of the Supreme Soviet in February with a view of introducing the necessary amendments to the law with regard to the opinion of the parliamentary committees and commissions. The government is expected to submit the budget report for the second quarter and the whole of 1992 not later than March 10

Deputies 'Sharply Critical'

LD2401174592 Moscow TASS in English 1732 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow January 24 (TASS)—The parliament of the Russian Federation today endorsed a law on the Republic's budget system for the first three months of 1992.

Under the law, the Russian Government is permitted to spend 420.5 billion roubles in the first three months of 1992 proceeding from the planned budget revenue of up to 420.5 billion rubles.

The budget allocates 17.6 billion roubles to ensure social protection of the population, including allowances for children amounting to 16.2 billion roubles.

While discussing the budgetary message from the Russian president, most speakers were sharply critical of the government's proposals for allocations to different sectors of the national economy. They were particularly annoyed at the government's omission to allocate anything at all to reform agriculture.

Deputy Sergey Polozkov pointed out that the government's proposal to delegate to local budgets the allocation of subsidies to maintain fixed prices for some food products was void as regions and territories had no money to speak of.

Several speakers said cuts in spending to maintain the Army and defence industry are also fraught with serious consequences. "Ten billion roubles allocated by the government for the purpose of conversion is not enough for severance pay to specialists who will be made redundant by conversion," Vitaliy Vitevskiy said.

Vladimir Shorin recalled recent disturbances in Tashkent and warned about the danger of more student rioting in connection with price liberalization. He said students have been reported to faint from hunger as no subsidized meals were available, which brought a number of universities to the verge of calling strikes.

Mass media are facing hard times in the wake of price liberalization. The government allocates a mere three billion roubles to maintain the press and culture. "The financial collapse of newspapers and magazines will lead to the collapse of reforms," a speaker warned.

Sergey Krasavchenko, chairman of the Russian parliament's property and economic reform committee rebuked the government for inflating the budget's revenue part and artificially dwarfing spending prospects. Speakers called for lesser spending on the upkeep of the presidential staff. The present allocations for the purpose reach 103 million roubles, according to Georgiy Zadonskiy.

Some speakers called for replenishing the budget by trading with Commonwealth member-countries at world prices and making the rouble convertible domestically.

Summarizing the discussion, Vice-Premier Yegor Gaydar assured the parliament that the government would take into consideration all the proposals and critical remarks made by parliament members.

He reminded parliamentarians that Russia does not enjoy economic sovereignty and the life of its citizens depends on the arrival of daily grain shipments of 120-130 tonnes in Russia's ports. Russia receives grain and fodder shipments bought with credit money issued by foreign partners in return for certain obligations assumed by the Russian Federation leadership. Foreign creditors deferred until March the payment by Russia of the Soviet Union's foreign debt of 11.3 billion roubles per month. The International Monetary Fund is controlling the progress of reforms in the Republic. "This is a step that is hurting our national self-awareness but this is the way things are", Gaydar said.

He told parliament that the International Monetary Fund would hear a report on economic reform in Russia in March to decide whether to defer the repayment of the former Soviet Union's debts by Russia. If Russia goes back on price liberalization or allows the budget deficit to grow, the agreements on Western food credits would be annulled, leaving people without bread in March or April and making the government powerless to avert chaos.

Gaydar Comments Viewed

LD2401153192 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1500 GMT 24 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Boris Yeltsin won an important victory in parliament today. An hour ago his version of a government budget for the first quarter of this year was adopted at a sitting of the Russian Supreme Soviet.

Deputy Premier Yegor Gaydar presented the proposals by the head of the government and president. He revealed some interesting figures. The government asks to give him the possibility of spending 520 billion rubles [R] within the first three months of this year, including R50 billion on the Army and Navy. State purchases of armaments are proposed to be reduced 7.5 times. The government also plans to sharply reduce expenditure on administration and law enforcement bodies. There will be no possibility to finance health care, education and science at the previous level. This is explained by the catastrophic situation in the economy. In the current quarter alone, according to Gaydar, the GNP of Russia will fall by 19 percent. It is clear that in such conditions the concept itself of financing the social sphere should change.

Yegor Gaydar spoke about the inefficiency of state financing of health care and about the need to enhance the share of commercial health care. Yegor Gaydar proposed that target support of low-income strata be introduced at the same time. Such an approach is remotely similar to Reaganomics—reducing budget programs and stimulating private enterprise, including the social sector. It is not clear, however, whether these approaches will work in our country as efficiently as they did in America at the time.

Regional Affairs

Ruslan Khasbulatov on 3-Day Visit to Sakha

Begins Tour of Yakutia

OW2601135492 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1241 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of Russia's parliament, has begun his tour of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia), in the course of which he is expected to discuss problems connected with relations within the Russian Federation.

First deputy chairman of Yakutia's parliament Vasily Vlasov has said that the leadership of Russia's biggest autonomy intends to discuss with R. Khasbulatov the ways to divide powers in the framework of the federation agreement. Besides, the talks in Yakutsk will involve the issue of dividing property rights. The draft of an economic agreement between Russia and Yakutia might also be discussed. Yakutsk intends to talk about prospects for maintaining centralized food, materials and equipment supplies for Yakutia. According to V. Vlasov, his trip to Yakutia should convince the chairman of Russia's parliament that the autonomy is "justified in its demands."

On Sunday [26 January] R. Khasbulatov visited a deer-breeding farm in Yakutia's north. He spent most of his time today inspecting a big diamond-mining facility in Udachny.

Visits Diamond Region

LD2601110992 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0930 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Report by TASS special correspondent Vasiliy Titov]

[Text] Udachnyy/Yakutia, 26 Jan (TASS)—"Yakutia is the diamond storeroom [kladovaya] of the Russian state," Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Russia, who is on a working trip around Yakutia, told journalists today. "And the people working and living here should get something from that storeroom, too. Energetic actions should be taken to use the wealth possessed by the region to make real improvements in the life of the people living in these difficult conditions."

The first day of the stay in Yakutia by the head of the Russian parliament began today with a visit to a factory

of the Udachnyy ore-dressing combine. This is one of the largest diamond mining enterprises in the world and gives Russia over 80 percent of its annual diamond receipts.

After the visit to the factory, Ruslan Khasbulatov visited the Evenki village of Eyik, where he met local inhabitants. The chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Russia is to set off for Yakutsk after visiting Mirnyy, "the diamond capital."

Speaks to Labor Collectives

LD2601205392 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1805 GMT 26 Jan 92

[By TASS special correspondent Vasiliy Titov]

[Text] Yakutsk, 26 Jan (TASS)—Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian parliament, ending a visit to Yakutia, met representatives of labor collectives of enterprises and of the "Yakutalmaz" association, as well as residents of Mirnyy and a number of regions in western Yakutia before leaving for Yakutsk today.

In his address, the head of the Russian parliament drew particular attention to the fact that the Russian Supreme Soviet is conducting active talks with the government and is preparing a draft joint document extending the list of goods and products for which prices are to be controlled by the state. Speaking about the reforms as a whole, Ruslan Khasbulatov noted that "they should be of a more controlled nature. Things must not be neglected. The situation must not be brought to such a state where all reforms become impossible." At the same time, the leader noted that the republic's supreme legislative body should unconditionally support the government's actions in implementing the reforms. But "we retain the right to criticize the government," he added, "and this includes very harsh criticism."

During the course of the meeting demands were voiced several times that Yakutia's genuine independence be guaranteed by actions and that the republic be granted the right to dispose by itself of everything on its territory and forming part of its natural resources. Responding to these demands, Ruslan Khasbulatov stated that the position of the Russian leadership is one of full support for the economic independence of the republics that are part of the Russian Federation. We respect the republic's sovereignty, he said. The actions of the Russian leadership with regard to the distribution of powers and property relations between the federal and republican authorities has nothing in common with an encroachment on national rights or sovereignty.

Mayor Popov Appoints Moscow Deputy Premier

PM2701112792 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 24 Jan 92 p 1

[Untitled RIA report under the "News in Brief" rubric]

[Text] RIA has learned from reliable sources that Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov has confirmed the appointments of members of Moscow's economic reform government. Konstantin Buravlev, who previously worked as deputy chief of the Moscow Soviet Committee for Construction, becomes the new deputy premier.

Deputy Mayor Presents New Moscow Government

LD2601100292 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Report by correspondent A. Pishchayev—from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Approximately two weeks ago Moscow's Deputy Mayor, Luzhkov announced the government's resignation. Today he presented the new cabinet to journalists. To tell the truth, rumors of the death of the old cabinet have been greatly exagerrated. The 24 people making up the government of economic reforms are on the whole ministers from the old cabinet, including scandalously well-known people. For example, Nikolskiy has been linked to events in Georgia. It is not ruled out that such a continuity is linked to the successful work of the former leadership. In any event, according to Luzhkov, it coped with its duties and prepared the city for the winter.

The Cabinet's structure has been renewed. Five administrative blocs have been created, each of which will resolve the capital's acute needs. Incidentally, the city's economy has been entrusted to the youngest member of the government, Buravlev, formerly a member of a cooperative. As Yuriy Luzhkov reports, an expanded social and economic program has been proposed to the Cabinet, which primarily contains intensified privatization of trade and social protection for the population, including servicemen.

The Cabinet's intentions to cut Moscow's administrative apparatus, at least by 25 percent, do not remain on paper. The former central directorates of trade which opposed privatization will not be passed over but will be abolished.

Moscow Deputies Protest Popov's Powers

LD2601164892 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 23 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Deputies of the seventh session of the Moscow city soviet today sent an appeal to President Yeltsin, people's deputies, and members of Russia's Constitutional Court. The document says that the Moscow city soviet deputies greet the Russian Federation's presidential decree granting additional powers to Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov with bewilderment and alarm. In the opinion of the deputies, this will allow Popov to establish personal control over Russian capital. The deputies

demand the repeal of the decree. The confrontation continues. [video shows top of decree reading: "Moscow City Soviet of People's Deputies; Appeal by the seventh session of the Moscow City Soviet of People's Deputies to the President of the Russian Federation, people's deputies, and members of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation; dated 23 January 1992; On decree No. 334 by the president of the Russian Federation dated 29 December 1991 "On Additional Powers for Moscow's Administrative Bodies During the Period of Conducting Radical Economic Reforms": The deputies of the Moscow city soviet greet the latest decree by the president of the Russian Federation with bewilderment and alarm. One reason for the publication of the decree is the ultimatum-type demand by Mayor G. Kh. Popov, head of the city administration, that he be given 'additional powers.' In the event that these demands are not met by the president of the Russian Federation, G. Kh. Popov has threatened to resign...."]

Moscow 'Club' Holds Antifascist Conference

LD2601180292 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1545 GMT 26 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast—first paragraph is introduction by announcer Tatyana Mitkova]

[Text] Something is wrong in the Democrats' camp. Yuriy Afanasyev has left the Democratic Russia Movement. Official figures are cursing the mass media from the floor of parliament for using an overcritical tone with regard to them. At the Moscow mayor's office today democrats were also cursing. Whom, you ask? Let's find out:

[Begin reporter S. Shatunov recording] Several years ago, a nongovernmental, political-cultural organization called the Moscow Tribune Club [Klub Moskovskoy Tribuny] was formed. It brought together highly qualified professionals from various areas of intellectual work and set itself the aim of analyzing and scientifically forecasting the situation in the country.

Today, in the building of the mayor's office, Moscow Tribune held a conference entitled: The New Tactics of Our Fascism. Speakers spoke harshly of the DEN [Day], PRAVDA, SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, and RUSSKOYE VOSKRESENYE newspapers, the well-known reporter Aleksandr Nevzorov, and, for some reason, the television first channel's "Novosti" program.

They spoke about the merging of national patriotism and the former party structure that has been occurring, and about the need to organize an antifascist front and their own paper. There were appeals for people to be called to the streets to show that there is more force behind the democrats than behind the procommunists. There were also calls for fascism to be fought by democratic methods, in particular, by calling for legislation to protect democratic interests. An appeal was also made to President Yeltsin to make a final choice between the democrats and representatives of the old administrative structures; otherwise, what happened to the former USSR president could happen to him. After all, the former wanted to give people the land but did not manage to do so in time. [end recording] [video shows meeting in progress, various speakers; Galina Starovoytova and Ilya Zaslavskiy identified among participants]

St. Petersburg Close to 'Boiling Point'

LD2501033892 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1600 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] The chairman of the Labor Union Federation in St. Petersburg, Yevgeniy Makarov, says the situation in that city may reach a boiling point by mid next month. Industrial enterprises may stand still and social unrest may follow if the current price hike is not curbed and taxation policies are not eased on the population.

Strikes Threatened Over Prices

OW2601174892 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1520 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The council of St. Petersburg's Federation of Independent Trade Unions and the local union of labor staffs have called for staging a warning strike in the region early next week. Trade unions believe that at least 34 biggest facilities in the area are ready for a strike. 16 more labor staffs will define their stand on Monday [27 January] or Tuesday [28 January].

The unions and labor staffs demand that the city's authorities lower the value-added tax and fine producers who exceed the food price limits fixed by the state.

St. Petersburg medics are also expected to stage a warning strike on Monday. They demand greater government allocations for medicine.

Chechen President Threatens Break With Moscow

LD2501062392 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 2200 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] The president of the Chechen autonomy in northern Caucasus, Dzhakhar Dudayev, says his Republic will never give in to Russia. Although the Chechen Republic proclaimed independence from Russia last fall, no country has recognized it.

Dzhakhar Dudayev has told a press reporter his Republic will sign a treaty with the Commonwealth of Independent States only if the Russian Federation recognizes its sovereignty. If it does not, the Chechen Republic will break off relations with this country and set up a Caucasian zone which will embrace the southern regions of Russia.

Considers Tatarstan Consolidation

LD2601161992 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1606 GMT 26 Jan 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Dzhakhar Dudayev: It is freedom and only freedom that I wish to people of Tatarstan on January 23, in a telegram addressed to the Coordination Council of Suverenitet (Sovereignty) Committee, bringing together representatives of national parties and organizations of Tatarstan.

The President of (the) Chechen Republic Dudayev made known his desire to come to Tatarstan to study work of public movements, to meet their leaders in order to consider the question of consolidating forces. Making use of each other's experience is a priceless experience in itself, concludes Dudayev.

Party Demands Chechen Committee Disband

LD2601192492 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] As learned from unofficial sources, the leader of the Vaynakh Democratic Party and the head of the Chechnya Parliamentary Committee for International Affairs addressed a demand to General Dzhakhar Dudayev, president of the Chechen Republic, requesting the resignation of the provisional committee for the operational running of the republic's economy, which is now fulfilling the functions of the government of the Chechen Republic. This is reported by ANI news agency.

Chechen Withholds Information on Gamsakhurdia

OW2701114592 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1105 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The authorities of Checheniya are withholding all information concerning the whereabouts of Georgia's ousted President Zviad Gamsakhurdia. The Chechen President Dzhakhar Dudayev's staff and the parliamentary press-center in Groznyy did not make any comments for IF [INTERFAX]. The Groznyy airport reports that the Sukhumi airplane Gamsakhurdia had allegedly taken to arrive in Checheniya landed in the airport at 14:07, January 26. No information was offered about the passengers. At 20:30 on the same day the plane took off for the Vnukovo airport. It is not known who was on board.

IF reports from Sukhumi that the ousted Georgian president called for disobedience campaigns, strikes and rallies in Abkhazia. He went on the air on Ochamchiri (a town in Georgia) local TV January 26 to criticize the Abkhazian parliament's decision to secede from Georgia.

Conference of Tatar Republican Party Held

LD2601195892 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1858 GMT 26 Jan 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] The constituent conference of the Republican Party of Tatarstan was held in Kazan on January 25. Gayal Murtazin, the author of the party's draft programme and rules, told a PF [POSTFACTUM] correspondent that the main goal of the Republican Party of Tatarstan is the protection of rights of every resident of our republic. We wish to become a mass party, which consolidates both the Tatars and Russians in the republic for the sake of Tatarstan's prosperity. The programme puts special emphasis on the new party's devotion to the idea of Tatarstan independence.

The conference, attended by 94 founders of the party, adopted a resolution, a declaration, and an address to the citizens of Tatarstan. The conference also elected the party's leading bodies, the central committee, the central control commission, and the central auditing commission. Ruzal Yusupov, rector of the Kazan teacher training college, was elected chairman of the party. The party's programme and rules will be submitted for approval to the first party congress which is planned for April or May 1992. The members of the elected bodies should also pass the approval of the congress.

According to some local politicians, the new party has little chance to become a mass international party. This is because a number of well-known leaders of the Tatar national movement were elected it the politbureau of the party's central committee. Among them are Marat Mulyukov, president of the Tatar public center, and Amir Makhmutov, leader of the sovereignty committee. This will likely repel Tatarstan's Russian-speaking population from the party. Experts believe that all documents of the Republican Party of Tatarstan were drawn on the basis of the CPSU programme and rules.

Tatar Kazan Conference May Trigger Rallies

LD2601160592 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1605 GMT 26 Jan 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Representatives of Tatarstan national parties and organizations are against holding on February 15-16 in Kazan a Conference of Republican Democratic Forces and national entities within Russian Federation [RF].

On January 24, RF People's Deputy Vladimir Lysenko, co-chairman of the RF Republican Party, told at the press conference: we have reached comprehensive mutual understanding with the Tatar public center, but its leadership strongly objects holding the conference of Democratic Forces in Kazan. According to Lysenko, he hasn't been able to secure support from leaders of the Ittifak Tatar Party of National Independence. According

to the opinion voiced by some local politicians, holding such a conference might trigger non-sanctioned rallies of national forces.

'Violent Power Takeover' Not Tatar Goal

LD2601160292 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1604 GMT 25 Jan 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Representatives of the organizing committee are to convene the first Kurultay of the Tatar people; the Milli Majlis does not set itself a goal of a violent power takeover. Initially, there was some talk about it, but afterwards we decided to act in accordance with the spirit of law, chairman of the organizing committee Zaki Zainullin told a press conference on January 23. Gabdelbar Faizrakhmanov, vice-president of the Tatar Social Center, stated that the Milli Majlis will propose legislation only in the sphere of religion, education and culture, while, as regards all other spheres, it will work out recommendations for the Tatarstan Supreme Soviet. There are reports that the unpublished draft law of the Tatar people 'on Milli Majlis' specifies that Kurultay and Milli Majlis shall be the supreme representational body of the Tatar people, they shall have a higher political and legal status than the parliament of the Tatarstan Republic. To achieve its goals, Milli Majlis may establish a united structure of representational and executive bodies of the Tatar people, subordinating them, in a centralized manner, to an all-Tatar extraordinary committee.

Ittifak leader Fauziya Bairamova said: if obstacles are put in the way of Kurultay, we shall go underground.

International Affairs

French Foreign Minister Begins Kiev Visit

LD2301201492 Moscow TASS in English 1858 GMT 23 Jan 92

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Aleksey Petrunya—TASS]

[Text] Kiev January 23 TASS—French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas arrived in Kiev on Thursday [23 January].

At Borispol Airport he was met by Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko and other Ukrainian officials.

Dumas will attend an official dinner to be given in his honour by the Ukrainian Government tonight.

On Friday [24 January], Dumas will meet Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk and Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko. He is also expected to sign joint documents and hold a news conference.

Talks With Kravchuk

LD2401153992 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, called his meetings and conversations during his stay in the Ukrainian capital intensive and fruitful; Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk received him today. A range of issues connected with bilateral political and economic relations, prospects for cooperation in the sphere of the peaceful use of atomic power, arms control, agriculture, and processing of agricultural produce were discussed in the course of their conversation. Both sides expressed their mutual confidence that the development of Ukrainian-French relations has very good prospects.

'Legal Basis' for Keeping Crimea

AU2401163092 Paris AFP in English 1542 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] Kiev, Ukraine, Jan 24 (AFP)—Ukraine has a "serious legal basis" for keeping Crimea, French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas said here Friday [24 January] during a tour of the four nuclear powers in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

On Thursday [23 January] Russia's parliament voted to review Moscow's 1954 decision to hand the strategic peninsula over to Ukraine.

"Ukraine wants to settle this issue through negotiations and not by force," Dumas told a news conference in the Ukrainian capital. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko, at the same news conference, said Ukraine "rejects any territorial pretensions, wherever they come from." Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk's political adviser Nikolay Mikhalchenko said: "Ukraine's political leaders have never made territorial claims, but they could have." In an interview with AFP, he said he did not understand why the issue was being aired "endlessly, when Russia's president and leadership have officially declared, in documents, that Crimea is an inalienable part of Ukraine."

Meanwhile, Ukrainian Defense Minister Konstantin Morozov said of the Black Sea Fleet, which both Russia and Ukraine want control of: "Ukraine doesn't need strategic forces. It will only keep the non- nuclear part of the Fleet" to defend itself.

Dumas said France and Ukraine had signed an agreement Friday covering the technical use of nuclear energy. He said he was "convinced Ukraine is ready to satisfy more rapidly (than expected)" requirements for becoming a "non-nuclear state." Dumas said he believed Ukraine might divest itself of tactical nuclear arms by July, and of strategic weapons by 1994.

During his visit, the two sides signed a protocol on diplomatic relations and France planned to turn its consulate in Kiev into an embassy, Dumas added. He said the two countries planned to cooperate in the domains of energy, construction, automobile manufacturing and agriculture.

While here, he held talks with Kravchuk and other Ukrainian leaders, particularly on the issue of converting Ukraine's military industry to civilian use.

Dumas, who visited Moscow Thursday [23 January], later left Kiev for the Kazakhstan capital Alma Ata, after which he will go on to the the Belarus capital Minsk.

Kravchuk on Crimea, Nuclear Arms

LD2401182892 Moscow TASS in English 1545 GMT 24 Jan 92

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent Aleksey Petrunya]

[Text] Kiev January 24 TASS—Ukraine will become a nuclear-free state. All tactical nuclear arms will be withdrawn from its territory by July 1, 1992 and all strategic warheads will be eliminated by 1994, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk told visiting French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas on Friday [24 January]. 35 per cent of tactical nuclear weapons had already been withdrawn from Ukraine, Kravchuk said, adding he is satisfied "with the Russian help in the process".

Kravchuk disclosed that he and the leaders of all the other Commonwealth nuclear powers have a special telephone line by means of which the use of nuclear arms from the territories of these countries can be initiated or blocked. "I hope the day (to use the line) will not come", Kravchuk said.

The president informed that the final strength of the Ukrainian Army has been decided on. It will number 220 thousand people.

Kravchuk said the 1954 decision to hand over the Crimea to Ukraine was adopted according to the constitutional norms. The decision was taken by the Supreme Soviets of both Russia and Ukraine and was later approved by the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. Besides, the majority of the Crimean population voted for the peninsula to remain Ukrainian at a referendum held on December 1, 1991, Kravchuk added.

Dumas noted Ukraine has strong legal arguments in the dispute.

The Russian parliament authorised some of its commissions on Thursday to assess whether the 1954 decision on the Crimean handover corresponded to the Constitution.

Dumas News Conference

OW2401223292 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1849 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Excerpt] The French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas has said that in the course of his talks with the Ukrainian leaders he could see for himself their determination to make their country nuclear-free. The French Foreign Minister told a news conference in Kiev on Friday [24 January] Ukraine informed him it that 35% of tactical nuclear arms had already been withdrawn from its territory.

At the same news conference, in which the Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoly Zlenko took part, it was announced that Ukraine and France had signed an agreement to establish diplomatic relations, as well as a number of agreements on consultations between their foreign ministries and on consular relations.

Asked about Kiev's response to the Russian parliament's resolutions concerning the Black Sea Fleet and the problem of the Crimea, Zlenko said that "Ukraine rejects any territorial claims".

The Ukrainian Foreign Minister argues that the people of the Crimea decided their future in the referendum of December 1 1991, when they voted for remaining in Ukraine. Zlenko made it clear that Kiev would soon make appropriate decisions to "rule out any such statements and resolutions in the future." [passage omitted]

National Affairs

Kravchuk Comments on Independence, Cooperation

PM2401144892 Paris LE FIGARO in French 23 Jan 92 p 4

[Interview with President Leonid Kravchuk by Renaud Girard in Kiev; date not given]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Girard] Are the disagreements between Russian and Ukraine over the Black Sea Fleet not liable to degenerate into serious or even irreparable incidents?

[Kravchuk] I do not think so. And I have my reasons. At the latest CIS [Community of Independent States] meeting, the presidents of the Ukraine and Russia reached an agreement on the Black Sea Fleet. It envisages that part of the Fleet will be moved to Ukraine and that another part will belong to the strategic forces. This division will be defined by a Russian-Ukrainian bilateral committee.

We hope that all tactical nuclear weapons will be removed from our territory by 1 July. This affects the Fleet, too: From 1 July there must no longer be in the Black Sea any ships assigned to Ukraine carrying nuclear weapons. We Ukrainians believe that the Black Sea must be free of nuclear weapons.

[Girard] People in France are wondering about the present correlation of forces within the CIS. What does Ukraine expect of the CIS?

[Kravchuk] This correlation of forces had to exist. We are dealing with a new interestate organization. It is natural for it to encounter difficulties. They must be settled at the negotiating table on the basis of existing agreements (Dresden, Alma-Ata, Minsk).

I am sure that the Commonwealth has a happy future, as long as all its members honor their commitmnents. Of course, it will take us time to adapt to these new living conditions. So I am disinclined to exaggerate the situation. Indeed, the documents and agreements that we have produced show that we can work constructively within the CIS. And we will continue to do so.

[Girard] What else?

[Kravchuk] One example is that we have instructed our governments to settle customs and transit problems. This is being done. It means that we are managing to resolve the problems that arise. The fact that some of them are very serious does not mean that the Commonwealth cannot live and function normally. Be that as it may, it is only through talks that we will jointly resolve the most acute problems.

[Girard] The impression is that you mistrust Russia's hegemonic tendencies. Do you make your political decisions on the basis of this mistrust? Are you inclined to simply separate from the CIS and to pursue your own development?

[Kravchuk] Ukraine—and not only Ukraine—aims to live independently. The CIS is not a state or a supranational body. So all its members are independent states.

[Girard] And equal?

[Kravchuk] And equal. This is the most important point. I can never repeat often enough that Russia and Ukraine,

as well as the other member states, have equal rights. There must be no big brother within the CIS. If Russia, Ukraine, and all the other states recognize this principle, then the Commonwealth will work. But if one state intends to play a hegemonic role, then the Commonwealth will not live long. I told Yeltsin this. Ukraine is as independent a state as Russia, and we must respect each other. I would remind you that 90 percent of the Ukrainian people voted for independence.

[Girard] Is this not denying the past?

[Kravchuk] History has granted us some good periods, but also some grim periods when we were subordinate to another state's interests. We will not accept this. And this is in Russia's own interest. If Russia is democratic—which I do not doubt—it cannot presume to play a hegemonic role, to try to lead other nations. Everyone must realize this. We will safeguard our right to pursue our own domestic and foreign policy.

[Girard] Has Yeltsin understood this?

[Kravchuk] I think that he will inevitably understand it, because the democratic forces have become so extensive that whoever tries to hinder them will be compared to someone wanting to halt the course of history, that is, to oppose the peoples' freedom. But it is true that there are forces in the Ukraine and Russia that want a return to the past, which would be tragic.

[Girard] The trial of strength between you and Russia is rather like the struggle between the iron pot and the earthenware pot. Ukraine has 652 million inhabitants, and Russia 180 million...

[Kravchuk] I think that common sense will prevail in both the Ukraine and Russia. I am sure that neither the Ukrainians nor the Russians will ever take up arms against each other. Our two great peoples have a common history in which their roots and families are intertwined. Almost 12 million Russians live in Ukraine and over 5 million Ukrainians live in Russia.

Many Ukrainians work in Tyumen in the Siberian oilfields, in Moscow, in St. Petersburg. Many Russians work all over Ukraine. We will find absolutely every way to resolve our problems peacefully. Do I need to remind you that the Ukraine's prime minister, defense minister, and military industry minister are all of Russian origins?

[Girard] Has the Ukraine's nuclear disarmament started? If so, who is coordinating and financing it?

[Kravchuk] Yes, nuclear disarmament started in the Ukraine in December 1991. Russia is responsible for destroying the nuclear warheads, which will take place under joint supervision. We are grateful to Russia and to Boris Yeltsin for supporting Ukraine's desire to denuclearize.

[Girard] Do you plan to destroy them on Ukrainian or Russian territory?

[Kravchuk] On Russian territory, because we do not have faciities capable of doing it on our own territory. Their destruction will be carried out by an enterprise in the Urals. The timetable for the nuclear warheads' withdrawal was drawn up by the Ukrainian Defense Ministry and the commander of the CIS strategic forces, Marshal Shaposhnikov. Ukraine must ensure the delivery of the weapons to be destroyed on the dates set by the timetable: all the tactical nuclear weapons by 30 June 1992, and all the strategic nuclear weapons deployed on our territory by December 1994.

[Girard] Is this timetable not liable to cause you problems?

[Kravchuk] The dismantling of strategic weapons will demand a great effort. This is why we are giving ourselves three years to destroy them. I know that France has stated its willingness to help us in this operation, but I must say that we do not have the money to finance our disarmament program. Therefore we are relying on Russia, which supports our viewpoint on destroying the strategic weapons and has stated its willingness to give us material help.

[Girard] One-fourth of the Red Army is stationed on your territory. What do you think will be the military, social, political, and economic consequences of the personnel cuts and the conversion of your military-industrial cpplex?

[Kravchuk] The problem is far from simple. We will do our utmost to ensure that cuts in the number of officers do not affect their social status. We will guarantee incomes for as long as necessary, even to those who will not hold any post. Retirement pensions will be guaranteed, as will housing, in accordance with Ukrainian law. We will take care of the officers until they can convert and find new jobs.

As far as the military-industrial complex is concerned, we expect a great deal from the West in helping us to convert.

[Girard] How do you explain the fact that on 11 December the Ukrainians elected a former communist president, even though they are constantly complaining about the damage done by communism in their country?

[Kravchuk] Fortunately, the Ukrainians' mentality is such that they chose their president not on the basis of his past but on the basis of his current actions, what he does each day to defend his people's interests. There are many examples in history of democracts who became dictators. In our country freedom of the press has changed everything.

The voters now see me as I am. Unlike before, politicians can no longer hide themselves from them. We had a pluralistic election, and nobody questioned its democratic nature. I am keen to express my gratitude to the 20 million voters who voted for me.

[Girard] Could you explain your personal development? How and when was Kravchuk—known in the West as an

ideologue not only of communism but also of the Union—converted? How do you explain your failure to officially condemn the putschists on 19 August?

[Kravchuk] Your information is incorrect. On 19 August I spoke in Ukrainian television. I stated then that we did not accept any unconstitutional structures of any kind and that the Ukraine was an independent state and that the decisions of the Committee for the State of Emergency did not apply in Ukrainian territory. So I did indeed condemn the coup!

Of course, I did not go into the street with a banner... But the situation did not require that, I had no reason to do so. The state of emergency was not implemented anywhere in the Ukraine. We declared that the Ukraine was an independent state that had nothing to do with the Committee for the State of Emeregency. That was our most important political decision.

[Girard] What about ideology?

[Kravchuk] In this field a politician's stance is based on what he knows. For instance, I did not learn the truth about the 1933 famine in Ukraine until 1989, because that was when I discovered the records. I also learned all about the effects of Stalinism, about the executions and torture. That was when my position and my opinions changed. Then my political aims changed radically.

I was only head of the Central Committee's ideology department. I never defined the dogmas. I only implemented them. The main ideologue was the first secretary.

[Girard] How did you form your beliefs?

[Kravchuk] Neither my way of thinking nor my beliefs were formed on the basis of what I was able to read in the newspapers. I studied the utopian socialist philosophers and I was also keen on reading the idealist and existentialist philosophers, and many others too. This shows you that my beliefs stem from all these threads, not just from a reading of popular works. I created my own political, economic, and ideological foundations and subsequently complemented them with the information that I gained about contemporary history from the opening of the archives. I then realized what I must do for my people. I told myself that the time had at last come to guarantee their independence.

[Girard] Do you envisage inviting Pope John Paul II to the Ukraine? If so, when?

[Kravchuk] I have never considered this matter. We have not had any contacts. It would be necessary first to examine the consequences of such a visit for the Ukraine and to know whether or not it would be a good thing for Ukrainian believers as a whole. I assume that Pope John Paul sees the issue the same way.

[Girard] Roland Dumas is coming to Kiev. What specifically do you expect from France in terms of diplomatic backing?

[Kravchuk] During my visit to France I met with both President Miterrand and Roland Dumas, who has already visited the Ukraine. We noted that the Ukraine and France have every reason to maintain the best of relations. They share a common history. We even had a French queen! (Anne of Kiev became queen of France when she married Henry I in 1501—LE FIGARO editor's note) Their population and surface area are similar. France possesses high technologies. It too is an ancient civilization. Furthermore, Ukraine offers a large market. Ukraine intends to be a peaceful, nuclear-free, and neutral state not belonging to any military blocs.

With France we could cooperate in the civilian nuclear field and in converting arms enterprises, of which there are a great many in the Ukraine (some 1,400). Last, we are a granary. France could help us in the agricultural and food field. These are at least three fields in which direct economic cooperation is possible.

Ukraine will also have its own convertible currency, which will make it possible to improve our trade relations. We hope that France will support our desire to sign cooperation agreements with Europe so that eventually the Ukraine can become a full member of the EEC. France enjoys great prestige in Brussels, and we would greatly appreciate its help in this regard.

[Girard] Do you think that Russia's mode of government could provide a political model for you?

[Kravchuk] I do not think so.

[Girard] Why not?

[Kravchuk] I will tell you another time...

Zlenko Issues Statement on Crimea's Status

LD2401224992 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Statement by Ukrainian Foreign Minister A.M. Zlenko on Russian claims of Crimean territory; place and date not given; from the "Novosti" newscast—recorded]

[Text] We have a very strong legal basis defining everything on the Crimea. First, I would like to say that the people themselves define the Crimea's status. Obviously, this problem cannot be resolved through parliamentary statements. Talks are particularly necessary since the Crimean situation can set a precedent, for Russia has borders with other republics as well. We all remember the beginning of armed conflict in Yugoslavia, where territorial claims of two neighboring republics were the basis for the conflict.

Fokin Interviewed on Results of Yeltsin Talks

LD2501144592 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1303 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Report by UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent Aleksey Petrunya]

[Text] Kiev, 25 Jan (TASS)—"Our talks with Boris Yeltsin were very fruitful, and we returned from Moscow with satisfaction, although we do not harbor any particular illusions," Ukrainian Prime Minister Vitold Fokin said in an interview given today to a UKRINFORM correspondent. He headed a delegation of representatives of Donbass miners' collectives and heads of a number of large industrial enterprises which met with the Russian president on 24 January. They talked about the restoration of economic ties, which are being broken.

Vitold Fokin explained that an extremely complicated situation regarding the work of Ukranian enterprises has recently taken shape, because of the shortfall in deliveries from Russia. Enterprises of key industries—coal, metallurgical, and machinery construction—have been affected the most. For instance, approximately 50 mines stopped working today because of the absence of timber, which is used to make pit-props.

Having learned of this, Boris Yeltsin made it incumbent upon relevant officials to resolve these issues in the course of a week.

Replying to a question on whether the Crimean problem was discussed at the meeting, the problem which had once again been raised by deputies of the Russian Parliament, Vitold Fokin noted: "This issue was one of the topics we discussed during our conversation, from which I can conclude that the Russian president does not support the deputies. As was stressed during the conversation, he abides by the agreement signed by the heads of states which had joined the Commonwealth of Independent States."

Fokin Approves 'Urgent Economic Measures'

LD2501162292 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1800 GMT 24 Jan 92

["Ukrainian Prime Minister Vitold Fokin approved urgent economic measures"; from the "Domestic Market" section—POSTFACTUM headline]

[Text] Prime Minister Vitold Fokin of the Ukraine decided to submit the program of urgent economic measures to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet after it had been considered at the session of the State Economic Council, a consultative body under the Ukrainian prime minister on January 23. The state minister of Ukraine for property and entrepreneurship Vladimir Lanovoy told PF that the program constituted a conceptual scheme of all economic transformations in the republic and comprised 4 parts.

The first part of the program envisages a transfer to the market system at the current rate. According to V. Lanovoy, that implies an actual change in the system of commodities turnover—the transfer from distribution to the sale-purchase system, commercializing of the economic infrastructure including banking network.

The second part of the plan contains the description of reforms aimed at balancing the money, the prices and the commodities. The reform in question, among other things, stipulates lower tax rates, lower VAT [value added tax] with the profit tax remaining at the same level.

The third part deals with the separation of the state from the property structures. V. Lanovoy said that about half of the enterprises would be privatized. The privatization of small enterprises is to be carried out through the issuance of licenses, similar to the way it was done in Czechoslovakia. Major enterprises are to be turned into joint-stock companies.

According to V. Lanovoy, the process of privatization is due to begin on March 1, 1992. As for the privatization, Ukraine cannot follow Russia's step in selling facilities for rubles. For us that would mean selling them for the money of a different country, said the minister.

Finally, the fourth part of the program concerns the problem of establishing state control over the economic space of the republic, i.e. introducing the state currency, setting tariffs for using the Ukrainian airspace, land and mineral resources. V. Lanovoy relies on the president for the success of the program, rather than on parliament, saying that the president should be granted additional legislative powers.

Deputy Minister Disagrees on Fleet Question

OW2401223492 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1849 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Ukrainian Deputy Defence Minister Ivan Bizhan believes that his country's future Navy should incorporate all units of the Black Sea Fleet, except for its strategic components. He disagreed with the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces of the Commonwealth, Air Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, who believes that a mere 7 percent of the Black Sea Fleet can be handed over to Ukraine.

Bizhan says Ukrainian officials are certain that the whole of the Black Sea fleet should be made Ukrainian in order to keep it united. In that case the Fleet would cooperate with the Armed Forces of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] in strategic missions until 1994, when Ukraine becomes nuclear-free.

Morozov Wires Kasatonov Concerning CIS Oath

OW2401171092 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1609 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Friday [24 February], Ukrainian Defense Minister, Colonel-General Konstantin Morozov, sent a telegram to commander of the Black Sea Fleet Igor Kasatonov urging the Fleet to refrain from taking the oath of allegiance to the Commonwealth of Independent States until Ukraine and Russia come to an agreement on division of the Fleet.

Meanwhile, sources in the Union of Ukrainian Officers say on Thursday [23 January] commander-in-chief of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Marshal Shaposhnikov sent a cipher telegram to Sevastopol ordering the Black Sea Fleet draftees to take the oath of allegiance to the Commonwealth of Independent States. The ceremony is scheduled for January 25.

Oaths Taken to Other States 'Will Be Annulled'

LD2501204692 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1843 GMT 25 Jan 92

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Sergey Balykov]

[Text] Kiev, 25 Jan (TASS)—Any oath of allegiance to Russia or any other Commonwealth state which officers, although Ukrainian citizens, are obliged to take while serving outside the republic— will be annulled on their return to their homeland. This view was expressed today at a plenum of the executive committee of the Ukrainian Officers' League by the league's head, Colonel Vilen Martirosyan, who is also chairman of the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers Committee on Social Protection for Servicemen. We afford protection for all servicemen from Ukraine, wherever they may be serving, he remarked.

The plenum considered questions concerned with building Ukraine's armed forces, socio-juridical protection for servicemen, and personnel changes. Those assembled sharply criticized the practice of making appointments to officer posts and awarding military titles without reference to the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense. It was noted that, unknown to the ministry, the Commonwealth of Independent States commander in chief has promoted about 10 servicemen to high office, some of them from outside the Ukraine.

Minister Confirms Weapons To Be Sold

OW2501183092 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1516 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] State minister Viktor Antonov has told journalists in Kiev that Ukraine, where there are 700-odd munitions plants, will sell weapons to foreign countries. Israel has shown an interest in products of this kind, the minister said and added that Kiev would like to sell weapons to France and India. The latter concluded with the former Soviet Union a long-term contract under which it had to be supplied with weapons manufactured in Ukraine.

Belarus

First Batch of Nuclear Weapons Moved to Russia

LD2601113292 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1049 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Report by BELTA correspondents Vladimir Glod and Aleksandr Kryzhanovskiy]

[Text] Minsk, 26 Jan (TASS)—The first batch of tactical nuclear weapons have already been transported from Belarus to the territory of the Russian Federation, where in accordance with an accord they will be destroyed.

This was stated today by Leonid Privalov, deputy chairman of the commission for matters of national security of the Belorussian parliament. Speaking at a "round table" for journalists covering the visit of French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, he confirmed the republic's commitment to becoming a non-nuclear, neutral state in the near future. "Belarus will be free of strategic nuclear weapons in approximately 1996 or 1997," Leonid Privalov said. After this, only the armed forces of the republic of Belarus will remain on its territory. The deputy chairman of the parliamentary commission did not give their projected number. "Today, Belarus cannot see an enemy who it is necessary to go to war against, either on its borders or further afield," he stressed.

Minister Remarks on Intentions Toward Navy

OW2501182392 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1516 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Belarus' defense minister has said his republic does not intend to create its own Navy, but will be willing to receive its share in case the former Soviet Navy was split. Mr. Petr Chaus reminded in an IF [INTERFAX] interview that Belarus, along with the other republics, has long invested big amounts of money into the all-Union Navy. In case it was split it is ready to receive its share not necessarily in cruisers and nuclear submarines, but in "some other form". According to the defense minister, the issue of splitting the former Soviet Navy is bound to be raised during talks between heads of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] member-states.

As early as this year, Mr. Chaus said, all tactical nuclear weapons will be moved from Belarus to Russia where they will be destroyed. With regard to strategic nuclear weapons, they "will stay for some time in our territory, and dates of its eliminations were set by agreements between the USSR and the USA".

The Belarussian defense ministry does not plan to fabricate its own weapons, however, it is ready to continue supplying parts for space military systems. As far as the production of space weapons is concerned, "it should be financed by all the member-republics of the Commonwealth with each republic paying its fair share".

The size of Belarus' army will not exceed 80,000 people, he said, suggesting that it will be formed both from conscripts according to law and from volunteers on a contractual basis. In the near future, the Belarussian parliament, Mr. Chaus said, will consider a draft law on alternative service vhich is supposed to make clear the way the Belarussian army is to be formed. The Belarussian military district is to become a basis on which a new army will be founded, the minister said.

One of the most urgent problems of today, in Mr. Chaus' view, is the return of about 40,000 Belarussian commissioned and non-commissioned officers of the Soviet Army who serve outside their republic's borders.

Shalodonov Leads Commonwealth Liaison Group

LD2601201192 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belorussian 0400 GMT 23 Jan 92

[Text] Vasiliy Shalodonov, deputy chairman of the Belarussian Supreme Soviet, is head of the parliamentary commission for liaison with the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The commission has been set up based on a decision of the Presidium of the republic's Supreme Soviet, in order to ensure coordination of activities of the Commonwealth states.

Group Established To Examine Military Issues

LD2601051692 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0000 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] The RIA agency has learned from sources close to the leadership of the Republic of Belarus that a working group has been set up with instructions to elaborate a number of draft documents on military issues, including draft laws on the status of the republican armed forces, the defense of the Republic of Belarus, social protection for servicemen serving on its territory and their families, and military doctrine.

Supreme Soviet Considers Creation of Fleet

OW2701115892 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1105 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The parliament of Belarus, the republic having no sea coasts, is considering creation of a state structure for managing its own trade and fishing fleet. Belarus intends to claim its share in case the former Soviet republics begin dividing the fleet. This Belarussian fleet will be managed by one of the departments of the Transport Ministry which is currently being reorganized. The department is expected to be led by Nikolay Zinkovich, a former official of the Soviet Navy Ministry. Belarussian specialists do not hasten to count how many ships and naval bases the republic can claim. It has not been

ruled out that this issue will be discussed at the future meeting of the Commonwealth states' leaders.

Foreign Minister Says Chernobyl Pollution 99%

AU2601213892 Paris AFP in English 2050 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] Minsk, Jan 26 (AFP) — Ninety-nine percent of the surface area of Belarus was polluted by nuclear radiation released in the 1986 disaster at a nuclear plant at Chernobyl, in neighbouring Ukraine, the Belarus foreign minister, Pyotr Kravchenko, said Sunday [26 January].

Kravchenko said the nuclear meltdown and explosion of April 26, 1986 had caused a 22-fold increase in cancer of the thyroid gland among children. He was speaking at a joint news conference with visiting French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, who has since returned to Paris.

French Foreign Minister Arrives in Minsk

LD2501184492 Moscow TASS in English 1814 GMT 25 Jan 92

[By BELTA correspondent Vladimir Glod and TASS correspondent Aleksandr Kryzhanovskiy]

[Text] Minsk January 25 TASS—French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas arrived in Minsk in the evening today.

"Real power, which previously was in the hands of the centre, has gone over to the sovereign states. In this situation we must have a clear idea of the stand assumed by the Belarussian parliament and government on a number of issues, in order to understand in what way to develop relations between France and Belarus," Dumas told BELTA-TASS.

The French foreign minister will meet tonight his Belarussian counterpart Petr Kravchenko. His meetings with Chairman of the Belarussian Parliament Stanislav Shushkevich and Minister for Defence Affairs Petr Chaus are planned for Sunday [26 January].

Protocol on Relations Signed

LD2501224992 Moscow TASS in English 2209 GMT 25 Jan 92

[By BELTA and TASS correspondents Aleksandr Kryzhanovskiy and Vladimir Glot]

[Text] Minsk January 26 TASS—French Minister Roland Dumas and his Belarussian counterpart Petr Kravchenko met late at night on Saturday [25 January]. As a result of their meeting, a protocol on the establishment of diplomatic relations between Belarus and France was signed.

According to Dumas, the purpose of his visit to Belarus is the development of relations between the two countries on a new basis with due account for the state sovereignty of Belarus.

Commenting on the results of the talks, Dumas said: "We have signed a very important document, on the basis of which we shall establish durable relations between France and Belarus. We shall support the candidature of Belarus in all international organisations and primarily the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). I invited the Belarussian leaders to come to Paris in order to sign the Paris Charter, which will seal the joining of CSCE. We shall also establish bilateral relations in the sphere of politics, economy, and culture. This is the essence of my visit to Minsk."

Responding to a question about prospects of economic cooperation between France and Belarus, Dumas pointed out that Kravchenko had informed him in detail about the economic problems facing his country. The ministers discussed them in the setting of the market-oriented economy, which is being created in the republic. "We discussed the conversion of the arms manufacturing industry in the light of the prospect of Belarus becoming a nuclear-free power. I shall meet other Belarussian leaders, and we shall find a way for France to promote the conversion and transformation of the Belarussian industry," he stressed.

Kravchenko said that they had discussed five main problems, including those connected with the democratisation processes taking place in the republic, the adoption of a new constitution, the development of market relations, some military-strategic problems, and the elimination of nuclear weapons on Belarussian territory.

Dumas, Defense Minister Meet

LD2601114992 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1047 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] Minsk, 26 Jan (BELTA-TASS)—Today, French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, who is in Minsk, met Petr Chaus, the minister for defense affairs of the Republic of Belarus. In the course of their conversation, the ministers discussed matters to do with Belarus's joining the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in 1993 as a non-permanent member, the prospects for the republic's emergence as a nuclear-free power, military-strategic problems connected with the destruction of nuclear weapons, and aspects of the conversion and transformation of Belarussian industry.

"We were interested first and foremost in two categories of issues," Roland Dumas told journalists after the meeting. "The siting and destruction of nuclear weapons and conventional armaments, and also the mechanism of political and technical monitoring of the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Belarus."

Petr Chaus confirmed that representatives of Belarus "will accompany nuclear weapons withdrawn from the

republic and will be present at their destruction." "As far as the transitional period of the transformation of the conventional armed forces is concerned, in our view, it should include such features as the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Germany, from the countries of the Baltic and Transcaucasia, and also the solution of the social problems facing servicemen," the Belarussian minister stressed. With regard to the strategic forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Belarussian armed formations, we are preparing ourselves for an agreement between Belarus and Russia, and between Belarus and Ukraine. A Belarussian law on the status of the armed forces on the territory of the republic has also been drawn up. A proviso will be made for all these issues and the interaction between these two forces will be defined there." [quotation marks as received]

Visit Ends; Relations Established

LD2601144492 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1330 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] Minsk, 26 Jan (BELTA-TASS)—The official visit to Minsk by French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas ended today with diplomatic relations being established between Belarus and France.

"France will open up an embassy in Minsk very soon," the head of French diplomacy said today at a news conference on the results of his visit to Belarus. According to the minister, a large group of experts will come to this republic soon in order to sign a number of economic and commercial agreements. "This became possible after I received official assurances that Belarus will pay its share of the global debt of the former USSR," Roland Dumas stressed.

The same day the French foreign minister left for Paris.

Vietnamese Official Visits; Protocol Signed

LD2501042492 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1623 GMT 24 Jan 92

[By BELTA correspondent Larisa Lazar—TASS]

[Text] Minsk, 24 Jan (TASS)—The Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Republic of Belarus signed a protocol here today on the establishment of diplomatic relations at the embassy level. In Minsk today Nikolay Kostikov, deputy chairman of the Belarus Council of Ministers, received an official delegation from Vietnam led by Nguyen Duy Nien, deputy minister of foreign affairs and special envoy of the chairman of the Council of Ministers. The meeting featured discussions on how to further enhance the breadth and depth of bilateral, mutually beneficial cooperation in political and economic matters.

Further on Talks

LD2601221192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1630 GMT 26 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Denisovich]

[Text] Hanoi, 26 Jan (TASS)—In the future Vietnam will continue to strive for enhanced relations of friendship and comprehensive cooperation with the Republic of Belarus. As reported by the Vietnamese news agency today, this was stressed during the visit that ended yesterday by Nguyen Duy Nien, deputy foreign minister of Vietnam and special envoy of the chairman of the Council of Ministers.

While in Minsk Nguyen met official representatives of the Belarus Foreign Ministry and Agriculture Ministry. During the meetings both sides expressed their conviction that trade and economic relations between Belarus and Vietnam under the new circumstances will be strengthened on the basis of mutual benefit and equal rights. The Belarus side stressed its interest in developing cooperation with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the cultivation and processing of india rubber, tea, and agricultural produce and the manufacture of consumer goods. Belarus also expressed willingness to supply fertilizers, tractors, and trucks.

Both sides agreed to continue talks on treaties in economic, trade, and other spheres.

During the visit a protocol between Vietnam and Belarus on the establishment of diplomatic relations was signed.

Moldova

Snegar Remarks on Military Role, Romanian Ties

OW2401153692 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1352 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President Mircea Snegur of Moldova said to a visiting group of Austrian and German reporters that "the Commonwealth of Independent States will stay for some time, because the extent of integration among the member-states is really great. However, each of the members considers joining other communities of states".

With respect to the army's future, president Snegur said Moldova was interested in transferring some military units under its jurisdiction so that a foundation could be laid to set up the republic's own armed forces. In the future Moldova sees itself as a demilitarized zone. "Large military units not transferred under Moldova's jurisdiction will be viewed as occupational forces and will have to leave the republic", Mr. Snegur said.

Answering a question about Moldova's possible unification with Romania, Mircea Snegur stressed that at the present stage any artificial acceleration of the unification process is out of the question. "We shall wait to see further developments", he said.

Gen Pankov Meets Snegar on Military Issues

LD2401204592 Moscow TASS in English 1906 GMT 24 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Fedor Angeli]

[Text] Kishinev January 24 TASS—In light of arrangements with the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Republic of Moldova has a right to its own army, General Boris Pankov, deputy commander- in-chief of the Armed Forces of the Commonwealth, told Moldovan President Mircea Snegur. Pankov is staying in Moldova at the head of a military delegation to discuss a number of practical matters.

Pankov said that generals and officers of the Commonwealth Armed Forces who are Moldovan citizens will be subordinated to Moldovan authorities. Army units that are now deployed on the Moldovan territory will be placed under the Republic's jurisdiction. As for the 14th Army, Pankov said it could be temporarily subjugated to the commander-in-chief of the Commonwealth Armed Forces, since the Odessa Military District in which it was stationed became part of Ukraine.

Official on Determination for Republican Army

LD2401203692 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1600 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] The director of the Moldovan Department of Military Affairs, Nikolae Chirtoache, says Moldova is determined to have an army of its own. In the future, he told a reporter, men would sign a contract to serve in the Moldovan army. Moldova would start building its army by defining the status of the former Soviet units on its territory. The Moldovan Government would take it upon itself to finance the armed forces on the Moldovan territory during the interim period, said Mr. Chirtoache.

Protestors Demonstrate Outside U.S. Embassy

LD2601213192 Moscow Programma Radio Odin Network in Russian 1600 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] Up to 100 people picketed the U.S. Embassy in Moscow today, with placards condemning Kishinev's policy toward Moldova's nonindigenous population. According to one of the organizers, Viktor Machin, they were protesting the aggression being planned by the Moldovan Government against the Dnestr Republic. They were demanding the release of 22 members of the Dnestr Republic's guard, who they say are being tortured. Taking part in the demonstration were supporters of the Liberal-Democratic Party, the Union for the Protection of Soviet Citizens, the Committee for the Release of Sergey Parfenov and Other Special Purpose Militia Detachment Members, and representatives of other organizations. Yesterday, they picketed the Moscow missions of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Moldova.

National Bank President on Currency Supply

LD2701122992 Moscow Programma Radio Odin Network in Russian 1530 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] Throughout next month the National Bank of Moldova will ensure the provision of the necessary quantity of ready cash during the process of price liberalization and the increase of minimum wages and pensions, Bank President Leonid Tolmach told journalists. He said that National Bank reserves will be put into circulation, and expressed the hope that Moldova's order to the state banknote printing works will be ready in time. Moldova's chief banker believes that increases in prices and the cost of services should bring into circulation a good part of the 2 billion rubles that Moldova's population keeps under the mattress. In the near future, trading enterprises will switch over to the use of cheques [Russ raschetnyy chek] to pay for purchases costing more than 2,000 rubles, he said.

Kazakhstan

Nazarbayev, Dumas Agree on Trade, Relations

LD2601062692 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1723 GMT 25 Jan 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Kazakhstan and France on January 25 signed a document establishing diplomatic relations at the embassy level.

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev also told a January 25 news conference held on the occasion of an official visit by French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas to Kazakhstan that an agreement had been signed on establishing a joint group to work out a trade agreement between Kazakhstan and France.

According to President Nazarbayev, following the negotiations, the two sides discussed the situation within the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] and its prospects. President Nazarbayev also said that he had informed the French foreign minister and answered his questions on military matters.

President Nazarbayev said: All talks of any negotiations being held with any Arab states and organizations on sales on weapons are utterly groundless. This is not true. President Nazarbayev believes that someone wishes to underestimate the role of Kazakhstan. At the time when the UN Security Council was debating the issue of Kazakhstan joining the UN, they wished to create a political background to put obstacles in our way. There is no other way in which I may assess this provocative act.

President Nazarbayev also said that intermediate-range missiles falling under the reduction treaty are being taken out to Russia as only this republic has facilities for destroying these missiles. And we, President Nazarbayev said, are pleased to do this. As for strategic missiles, President Nazarbayev stated that his Republic is prepared to join the appropriate international missile reduction treaty which will be ratified by the republican parliament.

START Treaty Discussed

OW2501170692 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1356 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] France and Kazakhstan are satisfied with talks they held in Alma-Ata, president Nursultan Nazarbayev and French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas said at a news conference on Saturday [25 January]. Mr. Nazarbayev said the two sides signed a treaty establishing diplomatic relations between them. They also reached an agreement to set up a joint trade group. "Mr Roland Dumas' visit has laid a new foundation for economic and friendly relations between France and Kazakhstan", Mr. Nazarbayev remarked.

Mr Dumas, in his turn, promised that France would do its best to open its diplomatic mission in Alma-Ata as soon as possible. The newly-formed trade group is expected to visit Paris soon. The French foreign minister has assured Mr. Nazarbayev that Paris will assist Kazakhstan to join "all international financial institutions".

With respect to promising areas of cooperation, Mr. Dumas said that a French company had already reached an agreement to develop Kazakhstan's oil fields.

Arms control was one of the key subjects of the French-Kazakh talks. President Nazarbayev reassured the French guest that in accordance with a quadripartite agreement signed in Alma-Ata on December 21, 1991, all strategic weapons remained under unified command and control. "All talk about nuclear weapons and nuclear technologies being handed over by Kazakhstan to Arab countries is groundless. It is just someone's desire to diminish Kazakhstan's role" he explained "There are certain forces that want to distort Kazakhstan's clear stand on the subject matter".

He revealed that medium-range missiles were "being pulled out to Russia, and this process will be completed by 1994 with respect to strategic missiles, Kazakhstan is willing to join the START treaty, and the Kazakh parliament is to ratify it.

Asked about reports that a SS-19 missile was launched from the territory of Kazakhstan, Mr. Nazarbayev expressed his bewilderment as to why "this incident which occurred a month ago should be taken up now".

Nazarbayev To Privatize State, Collective Farms

LD2601155792 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1604 GMT 25 Jan 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev on January 25 intends to sign a decree on privatization of state and collective farms.

President Nazarbayev, having a meeting on January 24 with workers of the agroindustrial sector, also said that state and collective farms are to be privatized by March 1, their capital and circulating assets are to be transferred to collective ownership on a 10-15 year installment plan.

According to President Nazarbayev, each member of a collective farm is to receive his share, depending on the length of work, after which he will be given a free hand to start his own business.

Speaking about his intention to appoint, prior to March 1, heads of regional administrations (AKIMS), as provided by the Republican Supreme Soviet's resolution of January 13 this year, Nursultan Nazarbayev stressed: I hope that these will be entirely new people who have proved their worth in market economy. Take in your mind, Nazarbayev stressed, they will be given most stringent orders.

'All Companies' Can Engage in Foreign Trade

LD2701124492 Moscow Programma Radio Odin Network in Russian 1200 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Text] Kazakhstan President Nazarbayev has signed a decree on the organization of the republic's foreign-economic activities, the AZIYA-PRESS agency reports. The decree stipulates that all incorporated companies in Kazakhstan, irrespective of form of ownership, are entitled to engage in foreign-economic activities, brokerage included, without any special permit. The exceptions are exports of products of state significance.

Some Exceptions Noted

LD2701152892 Moscow TASS in English 1439 GMT 27 Jan 92

[By KAZTAG correspondent Konstantin Borodinov-TASS]

[Text] Alma-Ata January 27 TASS— All juridical persons in Kazakhstan now have the right to conduct foreign economic activities, including mediation services, without special registration, says a decree of Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev published here today.

However, some products will be exported by the state only: these include many types of fuel, natural resources, mineral fertilizers, grain, cotton, wool, caviar and medicinal raw materials.

The decree cancels normative acts adopted by bodies of the former Soviet Union in the sphere of foreign economic relations. It removes many limitations and instructions that hampered the development of activities in this field.

Kazakh citizens now have the right to open hard currency accounts in banks. The rouble exchange rate as regards foreign currencies will be determined by the republican national bank itself.

Public Reaction to Price Liberalization Cited

LD2501030392 Moscow TASS in English 0822 GMT 23 Jan 92

[By KAZTAG-TASS correspondent Vladimir Akimov]

[Text] Alma-Ata January 23 TASS—Millions of people regard the liberalisation of prices in Kazakhstan, which began on January 6, as a "shock without therapy". Instead of the predicted 3-4-fold increase, the prices have soared 10 and even 15 times over.

A social survey, carried out by the republican public opinion study centre, shows that 56 per cent of respondents are very much opposed to the liberalisation of prices, while 4 per cent regard it as outright robbery. It is worth noting that in October 1991 more than 50 per cent of respondents opted for free price formation in the republic.

Most of those polled believe skyrocketing prices are due to the dictate of producers and commercial bodies, shady operations by mafiosi structures and corrupt officials, uncontrolled export of goods. Many people believe the liberalisation of prices will not help overcome the shortage of goods, but will rather produce a further break-up of the economy and wholesale pauperisation of the population.

All this compels the republican leadership to take urgent measures against negative tendencies.

According to a decision issued by Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, about 10 per cent of the commercial space in urban areas will be placed at the disposal of state and collective farms, as well as processing organisations so that they could sell their production without any mediators. A ceiling has been fixed for producers' profits so as to prevent them from reducing output in order to keep up high prices. Prices of individual goods are being frozen and tougher measures are being taken against black-marketeering.

Presidential Decrees on Currency Being Ignored

OW2401150792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1352 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Kazakhstan's Premier Sergey Tereshchenko told a meeting of regional administrators on Thursday [23 January] that regional executive committees had been ignoring President Nazarbayev's decrees and doing little to return hard currency to the republic. He cited data showing that only 803 of the existing 894 bank accounts had been transferred in January to Kazakhstan's Foreign Economic Bank.

The prime minister noted that action on the presidential decree on trade had been "inadmissibly slow." Of the 550 urban shops slated for transfer to collective and state farms only 230 had actually been transferred to the farmers; in Alma-Ata the proportion was 66 to 1. Mr. Tereshchenko demanded that the presidential decrees be fully implemented within a week's time.

Tajikistan

Foreign Minister Denies Sale of Uranium Abroad

OW2501173292 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1356 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Tajikistan's Foreign Minister Lakim Kayumov has denied that any member of the republican government ever negotiated the sale of uranium ore or its derivatives with foreign representatives.

In an interview with IF [INTERFAX], he expressed surprise at the refusal of most countries worldwide to

recognize Tajik independence—allegedly because of the republic's sale of uranium abroad. The minister stressed that the Tajik parliament's appeal to the world community following the proclamation of Tajikistan's independence reiterated the republic's adherence to the Nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty.

President Addresses Internal, External Concerns

Appeals to Countrymen

LD2501221892 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Tajik 1800 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Appeal to Tajik people by Rakhman Nabiyev, president of Tajikistan—live or recorded]

[Text] A'salamu Alaykum [greetings in Arabic]. Dear countrymen and honored radio listeners!

It has been two weeks since we have been living under completely new economic conditions. After Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and other members of the Commonwealth, we too have had to introduce free prices. The mass media have said and written a great deal on the reasons for introducing free prices. This issue was examined at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the republic.

In my opinion it is not necessary at this moment to provide a detailed explanation and statement on this work. I only want to say that the leadership of the republic during this period considers its main task—even though it may not be so great—to be improving the social conditions of the people in association with introducing free prices. You know that even before the introduction of free prices we adopted a series of decrees. Among them was doubling the salary of the workers of the departments of [words indistinct] of labor was lifted, the amount of [words indistinct] of grants and other benefits were increased.

Life, however, is life. It requires that we amend our plans (?once in a while). A few days in our life under the conditions of free prices has made us aware of the need to make a comprehensive study of all the reserves of resources and improve the condition of the people. All of you, however, know better than others that the republic actually does not have any reserves and potential. The amount of pensions, grants, and other benefits, unfortunately, has only been fixed for the first three months of the current year and is full of deficiencies.

The very easy out, however, is to sit back and say we have no reserves. This is not our way. Therefore, yesterday I signed a decree on additional measures for the social protection of the students and pupils, former soldier-internationalists, pensioners, and other low-income groups of the population of the republic. In this decree I instructed that the number of the workers of the presidential apparatus be cut by up to 30 percent. The amount saved as a result of the cuts will be used for measures to improve the condition and well-being of the people.

I must note that we are not engaged only in cutting from this side and adding to other side. The major work is raising the economy and increasing (?mining) production, increasing the quantity of the goods produced. Only in this way can we feed and clothe ourselves. In this connection the following measures are being implemented. In the city of Kurgan-Tyube, with the assistance of the PRC a sugar plant will be built. In one year it will produce 28,000 tonnes of sugar, 10,000 tonnes of livestock feed, and 2,000 tonnes of [word indistinct]. Land has been allocated for the site. Specialists have promised that the plant will start production of goods in June of next year.

The state of affairs with the supply of oil and gas is in my opinion known to everyone. Oil and gas in reality, as I am saying, are the food of industry and transportation. When we do not have such food we have to purchase and bring it from other republics. They, of course, sell such products for hard currency. We, however, do not have any hard currency reserves. With our money one liter of oil currently cost 25 rubles [R], one kilogram of fuel oil costs R5, and one kilogram of diesel fuel costs R9.

I talked by telephone with Comrade Niyazov, president of Turkmenistan, and requested that for the sake of good-neighborliness that they slightly bring down their prices. He promised to invite our representatives. Today Comrade Karimov, first deputy prime minister, and Comrade Makhmudov, chairman of the Committee for Oil, left for Ashkhabad.

Even this, however, is not the solution to the problem. How can we get out of this situation? Recently I had talks with a group of workers (?in the field) of oil, gas, and geology. Having examined the difficult situation with the supply of oil and gas I asked them whether there is any possibility of our own production of oil and gas within a period of 18 months to supply the republic. The specialists convinced me that there is a solution, but that for this a lot of financing is required. I stated that the government is prepared to reduce contributions in other areas and possibly provide them with the required amount. It is thus necessary to state openly that we are very much lagging behind in our supply of electricity and other questions.

It is our own fault that oil production in the republic is falling year by year. For example in (?1989) we produced 300,000 tonnes of oil. Last year a total of only 90,000 tonnes of oil was produced. It is our own fault that the Rogun power plant is still not working. If today only two units of the plant were working we would not have any worries.

Moreover, we could have sold output for foreign currency. Currently Uzbekistan is asking R1.15 per kilowatt of electricity.

Let us take the Arzob tunnel, for example. The construction of only five km of road has been underway for many years. If the tunnel were operational today we could have saved thousands of tonnes of fuel and a lot of time. I

approached Comrade [name indistinct], director of the Arzob combine, to continue this work within his own (?authority). He promised that he would study and tackle this work.

A few days earlier I talked with a large group of leaders of the industrial and construction enterprises and (?farms). One thing pleases me. People want to work. They have interesting ideas and their courage shines. The "Sano" enterprise is constructing two plants, one of which will start working by September of this year. I must note that these plants work on the basis of (?seasons), that is they plant cotton and from their output they will produce goods. Initially the two plants with their 3,000 workers will produce goods worth more than one billion [units not given].

Other joint enterprises include the poultry plant and the bottle producing plant. The cities of Dushanbe, [name indistinct], Tursunzoda, Taboshar, Kulyab, Regar, Kurgan-Tyube, and [name indistinct], which are exploiting all their potential, are taking measures for producing the necessary goods for the people.

At the aluminum plant of Tajikistan the raw materials and (?ore) are not being supplied. The [name indistinct] plant which should have given 70,000 tonnes of (?ore) has not received even one tonne.

I made the situation clear to Nursultan Nazarbayev. Currently Kazakhstan will be supplying 270,000 tonnes of ore. It is no secret that today there is no cash available in the republic to pay wages. I have asked Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin to help us. On the instructions of Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin R400 million in cash has been delivered.

From this year the area of cultivation will be increased. Our aim is to use seven to eight [words indistinct] of our own seeds. Currently the Canadian Government is prepared to provide us with up to one million tonnes of wheat during the current year. It is possible to continue such (?trends). Briefly, work is continuing actively.

Anyone who sympathizes with the republic and the people can find work for themselves. Now is the time of entrepreneurs and initiators. I mentioned such activities because today some comrades blame the leaders of the republic for weakness and inactivity. Thus, when speaking of faults I would like to express my view on a few of them. You know that today the newspapers are full of all kinds of appeals and statements. First, I would like to say that I read the newspapers carefully. I must say that many interesting articles and valuable observations are being published. We are grateful for the newspapers. Other than this I receive many letters. In January alone, which has still not ended, I have received about 1,000 letters. The writers not only [word indistinct] but also suggest interesting proposals. I assure you that not a single good proposal is ignored by me or by the government. Each one of the letters is carefully read and the valuable proposals and initiatives enrich the intellectual wealth of the republic..

I must, however, honestly say that—as you know—if you do not do any work, no miracle can take place. Time is required for any kind of change and transformation. Currently we have started the changes. Unfortunately, not everyone understands this. It is from here that the presidential apparatus (?has become the target) of all kinds of appeals and complaints. Every political party and movement, every union and association, every meeting and gathering of residents in localities usually give ultimatums instead of practical proposals.

In addition they are using the worsening economic situation for their own political ends. This inadmissible political game has reached such an extent where it has been suggested that the repetition of certain types of known incidents are not out of the question in Tajikistan. At the same time, they unashamedly state that they are not responsible for consequences of affairs of state. They all demand that the president go to them in person and answer them in person. A logical question arises that whether one person, who is president, can go to everyone and answer them in person. A healthy mind would say of course he cannot.

Meanwhile, as you are aware, the republic leadership has recently met with the people more and more. We will never abandon this tradition. Because knowing the spirit of people means carrying out popular policies. Therefore, any improper statements in these difficult times are immoral.

I would like to reemphasize that we support a policy where representatives of all parties and movements are participating. But in formulating such a policy the voice of people is the (?solution). Today every (?citizen) of the Republic of Tajikistan, all of us workers, state farm workers, teachers, doctors, engineers, scholars, and others are tightly connected.

I would like, however, to approach the [word indistinct] the new entrepreneurs separately. It is no secret that I try to make all contacts with them. I would personally like to state that the leaders of the republic place great hopes on the entrepreneurs. They have revived the ancient tradition of our people and they are applying it directly to production. The entrepreneurs in the world of trade are the [word indistinct] envoys of the first sovereign state of Tajikistan. They should fulfill this holy and honorable task. I have full confidence in this.

Dear countrymen! We are embarking on a completely new path. We should primarily show patience, tolerance, and perseverance (?during) these difficult circumstances. Understanding is also important from the point of view that the whole world has an eye on the young and sovereign state of the Tajiks. So far about 70 states have officially recognized us. Our relations with other states are associated with the stability of the life of our country. We must do everything so that our international contacts develop and serve the (?well-being) of our people. I have confidence in my noble people and in their good future.

I fully believe that we will come out of this difficult economic crisis holding our heads high.

Stresses Self-Sufficiency

LD2301190292 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0753 GMT 22 Jan 92

[By TAJIKTA-TASS correspondent Valeriy Zhukov]

[Text] Dushanbe, 22 Jan (TASS)—The republic should be able to meet its own demands in gas fuel and crude oil in the course of 18 to 24 months. This should be the aim of oil and gas industry workers, as well as the geological service, stressed Tajikistan President Rakhman Nabiyev at a conference of managers of these industries. The republican head expressed concern in relation to the growing deficit of combustible materials, lubricants, and gas fuel. At the time of an overall liberalization of prices, Turkmenistan, a traditional supplier of these products, asks already almost 25 rubles for a liter of gas, and 870 rubles for 1,000 cu m of gas, which is far too expensive for the republican budget. At the same time, the Tajik president noted, there is every possibility for increasing the production of our own "blue fuel," crude oil, and for building processing enterprises in the republic.

Visits Dushanbe Markets

OW2601165292 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1520 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Sunday [26 January] Tajikistan's President Rakhman Nabiyev and Vice-President Narzullo Dustov visited several markets in the capital Dushanbe, including the Green Bazaar in the city's center. The president and the vice-president inspected the prices. In a brief interview with IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent they expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that there were very few representatives of collective and state farms among the sellers. The prices charged by collective farms, they said, are much lower than those charged by individual vendors.

Requests Membership in UN

LD2401064992 Moscow TASS in English 2102 GMT 22 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Yevgeniy Menkes]

[Text] United Nations January 22 TASS—Tajikistan President Rakhman Nabiyev has sent a letter to UN secretary-general, Butrus Ghali, requesting U.N. membership for Tajikistan.

The letter was supplemented with a declaration signed by Nabiyev, which read "the Republic of Tajikistan assumes the obligations envisaged by the UN Charter and solemnly pledges to fulfill them."

The letter and the declaration were circulated in the U.N. headquarters in New York City on Wednesday [22 January] as official documents of the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council.

Tajikistan is the fifth republic of the former Soviet Union to apply for UN membership over the last few weeks.

Earlier, similar requests were sent by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Armenia. Russia, Ukraine and Belarus have already been admitted to the international organisation.

Armenia

Foreign Minister Condemns Azeri 'Violence'

LD2401150792 Moscow TASS in English 1350 GMT 24 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Smelov]

[Text] Vienna January 24 TASS—Armenian Foreign Minister Raffi Ovanesyan blasted on Friday [24 January] the Azeri Government for the policy of "deporting and eliminating" Armenians in Nagorno-karabakh. "The Azeri military violance" is unacceptable, he told the APA News Agency.

The visiting Armenian foreign minister said the Karabkh population had voted for an independent state at a referendum and it is their opinion which is to become the basis for solving the bloodshedding conflict. Western support of such a solution would help evade "the second Yugoslavia" in the Caucasus, Ovanesyan said.

Nagorno-Karabakh, which makes part of Azerbaijan, can be granted "a special status", which would make it impossible for the Azeris to claim Karabakh would join Armenia as soon as it becomes independent, the minister said.

Yerevan is not worried by improving relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey, especially as the latter has called on Baku to refrain from the confrontation with Armenia and to look for a peaceful settlement.

Speaking on Armenian relations with Iran, Ovanesyan stressed that the Christian nation of Armenians has lived in peace with Muslim peoples for centuries, but added he is against new empires emerging in the region after the break-up of the USSR. The foreign minister said he would visit Iran in the middle of February to establish diplomatic relations with the neighbouring country.

Armenia is ready to fulfil all its commitments according to conventional arms cuts treaty, but "no regional disbalances" should occur while defining the limits of conventional arms remaining on the territory of each member of the Commonwealth, Ovanesyan said.

Statement Denounces Azerbaijani 'Terrorism'

NC2501160892 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1930 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] The Armenian Foreign Ministry has issued a statement saying that recent tragic events reconfirm that tension in the region has intensified due to the familiar policies pursued by Azerbaijan.

The statement notes that Azerbaijan has seized large amounts of modern military hardware, including the mass destruction Grad rocket system, from Soviet Army units stationed on its territory. Azerbaijan is using the weapons system for evil purposes.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry expresses alarm and deep concern over this fact and announces its resolute protest about the use of this weapon of mass destruction against the peaceful population of Armenian villages. It also denounces the seizure of citizens of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] as hostages, describing such acts as a manifestation of a policy of state terrorism.

The ministry is considering raising the issue of establishing appropriate international CIS and UN commissions to conduct an investigation into the actions of Azerbaijan and to investigate crimes committed in specific locations.

The ministry also expresses its conviction that states whose citizens are being forcibly detained in Azerbaijan will not remain indifferent toward the fate of these citizens.

Further on Statement

LD2401145192 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] Nagorno-Karabakh may, undoubtedly, serve as an example—a terrible example—of what a conflict between two republics can lead to, even if they are both part of one commonwealth. Armen Dulyan, a correspondent from the SNARK information agency, reports on the present situation in Nagorno-Karabakh.

[Dulyan] Shelling has broken out once again over the past few days from the capital of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Republic [NKAO]. On the evening of 22 January alone 45 Alazar missiles were hurled against Stepanakert. A children's hospital and dwellings were destroyed. Other Armenian populated areas in NKAO are also being shelled. The town of Martuni, one of six rayon centers, where the Azerbaijanis have completely cut off electricity and gas, has found itself under blockade. The people of NKAO are still suffering from an acute shortage of food and the fate of hostages captured in Azerbaijan on whose territory a Tbilisi-Moscow train was travelling remains unknown.

As we have already reported, representatives of the Azerbaijani militia and the People's Front of Azerbaijan stopped this train and took away 20 passengers of Armenian nationality—citizens of Armenia, Georgia and Russia—to an unknown destination. The Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has expressed confidence that the states, whose citizens are being forcefully detained on the territory of the Azerbaijani republic, will not remain indifferent to the fate of their citizens.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry statement also states that Azerbaijan has succeeded to expropriate from Soviet Army units a large quantity of up-to-date military equipment. The Armenian Foreign Ministry, the statement says, is posing the question of setting up appropriate international commissions of the Commonwealth

of Independent States and the United Nations to conduct a qualified inquiry into these and other similar actions on the part of Azerbaijan. The Foreign Ministry department has also demanded that appropriate sanctions be imposed on the Azerbaijani republic.

'Freedom Fighter' Operations Reported

NC2501170792 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1930 GMT 23 Jan 92

[Text] Following an operation carried out by the Armenian freedom fighters, the town of Shusha was bereft of power and a road link with the outside world.

Reports from various sources indicate that the freedom fighters in Shushinskiy Rayon blew up one of the high-tension towers sending power from Shusha to Kubatly. They also blew up and rendered worthless a section of the Shusha-Lachin highway, thereby depriving the town of a land link to the outside world.

The Armenians also attacked the (Nabilyar) village near Shusha and set it on fire.

No serious clashes took place in Nagorno-Karabakh on the night of 21 January; the relative calm was maintained. The Azerbaijanis continued to fire on Stepanakert with automatic weapons and machine guns. They fired on the town of Martuni from the village of Amirallar. The Armenian freedom fighters returned their fire.

Azerbaijan

Further on Mutalibov's Visit to Turkey

LD2601132292 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1247 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Report by TASS correspondent Aleksandr Chelyshev]

[Text] Istanbul, 26 Jan (TASS)—The official visit to Turkey by President Ayaz Mutalibov of Azerbaijan has ended. Today the eminent guest left for Baku. At Ataturk International Airport, he was seen off by Minister of State Serif Ercan; Governor of Istanbul Hayri Kozakcioglu; and other officials.

Speaking to journalists at the airport, A. Mutalibov noted that, despite the tight schedule, his visit to Turkey had been very useful and fruitful. The president put a high value on his meetings with business people in Istanbul, stressing that the use of Turkey's high technological potential would help Azerbaijan to switch to a market economy as soon as possible.

He also touched on the question of cooperation with Turkey in forming an Azerbaijan national army. A. Mutalibov in particular noted that Azerbaijan intends to send its future officers to Turkey for training.

President Agrees to Troop Training

LD2601232892 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 2117 GMT 26 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast—read by announcer Tatyana Mitkova]

[Text] President of Azerbaijan Ayaz Mutalibov reached agreement during his visit to Ankara that future officers of the future Azerbaijan Army will start training in Turkey.

Statement Issued on Attacks on CIS Units

LD2401141692 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] The Azerbaijan Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of National Security have made a joint statement in connection with the assaults by criminal elements on Soviet Army units stationed in the Republic, which have become increasingly frequent of late. The main goal of such assaults is to seize weapons. The statement says that extremists are trying to destabilize the political situation in the republic by making mutual relations between the population and the Soviet Army more difficult. The most rigorous measures envisaged by legislation will be applied to such people, the document says.

Nagorno-Karabakh May Be 'Emergency Zone'

Azeris Shell Stepanakert

LD2401162292 Moscow TASS in English 1359 GMT 24 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Stepanakert, Khankendy, January 24 TASS—Fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh has become so intense of late that the region can be proclaimed an emergency zone, Armen Isagulov, head of the Nagorno-Karabakh police, told TASS on Friday [24 January].

Azeri forces are now daily shelling Stepanakert. One person was wounded and eleven buildings, including the TASS office, were damaged on Friday.

The Armenian militants fired in response at the Azeri strongholds in the Azerbaijani villages of the Susha district.

Water and electric power supplies have been cut off for 17 days running. The central heating is not functioning, all stocks of flour and fuel ran out. Enterprises, offices, schools and kindergartens are closed. Local hospitals are overfilled with patients.

Heavy shelling of Nagorno-Karabakh from the Azeri territory was conducted on Thursday [23 January]. No casualties were reported.

Mass Attack on Karachinar

LD2501121292 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1058 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Report by TASS correspondent Zoriy Gukasyan]

[Text] Yerevan, 25 Jan (TASS)—A mass attack by subunits of Azerbaijan's National Army on the Armenian village of Karachinar in the Shaumyanovskiy rayon began today at 2 A.M. Heavy artillery and armored personnel carriers were used.

Approximately 500 shells were fired at the village from various types of weapons before the attack. Local self-defense forces repulsed the attack with great difficulty.

According to preliminary data, one of the Karachinar defenders perished during the fight; three people were wounded; 40 houses were demolished and damaged. Reports from Karachinar say that the Azerbaijani side also has losses, with both dead and wounded.

Heavy rocket and artillery firing at Stepanakert [Khakendi] began today at 7 am. Eight direct hits on houses have been registered. According to preliminary data, one person was wounded. Firing has been going on for three hours.

Stepanakert Again Under Attack

LD2601132892 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1200 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Report by TASS correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Stepanakert (Khankendy), 26 Jan (TASS)—After a "calm" night, early on Sunday, 26 January, morning Stepanakert once again came under massive rocket and artillery bombardment from the direction of Shusha. By midmorning, the firing ceased, but after midday, shells again started exploding in the administrative center of Nagorno-Karabakh. According to the internal affairs directorate of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, there is considerable damage in the town and four people have been injured.

As the TASS correspondent was told at the republican self-defense headquarters, the Armenian village of Karin-Tak in Shushinskiy rayon was attacked this morning. There are losses on both sides.

Casualties Reported

LD2601155292 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1505 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Report by TASS correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Stepanakert (Khankendy), 26 Jan (TASS)—At least seven people were killed and over 10 injured as a result of today's massed attack by Azerbaijani armed formations using armored equipment and artillery on the Armenian village of Karin-Tak of Nagorno-Karabakh. The republican headquarters of the self-defense forces told a TASS correspondent that there are women and children among the killed and injured.

'Fierce Fighting' in Shusha

LD2601233192 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 2117 GMT 26 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] In Stepanakert, casualties have been suffered following shelling. There are reports of fierce fighting in Shusha Rayon. According to the news center of the Azerbaijan People's Front, the fighters who attacked Azeri villages included black mercenaries. Today one black was discovered among the dead. A document was found on him testifying to his French citizenship, along with weaponry of foreign manufacture.

Georgia

State of Emergency Introduced in Abkhazia

AU2401171492 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Russian 1530 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] The Supreme Council of Abkhazia has decided to introduce a state of emergency throughout the territory of the Republic. [passage indistinct]

According to a government decree, an order has been issued to disarm 80 guardsmen supporting the ex-president.

Abkhazia Adopts Resolution on Law Enforcement

AU1701180992 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Russian 1550 GMT 17 Jan 92

[Text] Abkhazia—New anxieties and unrest. Today the mass media of the autonomous republic have published the resolution adopted by the Presidium of the Abkhazian Supreme Council on Measures for Protecting Law and Order in Abkhazia. It reads as follows:

The Presidium of the Supreme Council points out that the sociopolitical situation on the territory of Abkhazia has sharply deteriorated as a result of of acts of disobedience on the part of a number of public organizations to new structures of power of the Republic of Georgia. For the purpose of guaranteeing citizens' safety and their political and civil rights and also for creating normal conditions for the activity of the national economy complex, and guided by Abkhazian Constitution, the Presidium of the Supreme Council resolves as follows:

1. The Council of Ministers and the executive committees of town and rayon councils of Abkhazia must elaborate and adopt urgent measures to guarantee public order in the towns and rayons of Abkhazia, to strengthen

(?control) over and leadership of the activity of enterprises, institutions, and organizations.

2. The Procurator's Office, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the (?services) of public safety of Abkhazia (?must) reveal and call to account, in accordance with the law, those who violate public order, including organizers of illegal strikes and rallies.

3. The Council of Ministers and executive committees of town and rayon councils of Abkhazia must create, within three days, headquarters for ensuring public order and law.

4. To recommend that deputies of the Abkhazian Supreme Council and officials of executive and law enforcement organs conduct, in electoral districts, [word indistinct] work on the need to hold rallies and other mass undertakings in strict conformity with the current legislation.

5. The Permanent Commission for Legal Questions of the Abkhazian Supreme Council is in charge of exercising control over the fulfillment of the present resolution.

Deputies Boycott Abkhaz Parliament Proceedings

LD2501145592 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1307 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] We have just received another report by telephone on the situation in Georgia. It was prepared by Tengiz Pochkoriya, our correspondent in Sukhumi. Here it is.

[Pochkoriya] The sociopolitical situation is difficult and tense. A session of the Abkhaz Supreme Soviet took place in Sukhumi today. A total of 32 out of 63 deputies took part in the proceedings. The Georgian deputation and it supporters boycotted the session because the issues being tabled were not discussed beforehand. They are matters which, in the view of the Georgian deputation, might be aimed at violating the territorial integrity of the Republic of Georgia. The Abkhaz deputation and the Abkhaz Supreme Soviet leadership disagreed flatly with this opinion, stressing that the Abkhaz deputation had no intention of violating the territorial integrity of the Republic of Georgia.

It has to be noted that the sesssion of the Abkhaz Supreme Soviet adopted decisions on the Abkhaz Council of Ministers' resignation of its powers to the Supreme Soviet; on recognition of the universal declaration of human rights; and endorsement of the membership of a number of standing commissions of the Abkhaz Supreme Soviet. It adopted an Abkhaz law on the validity of laws and other legislative acts on Abkhaz territory.

Simultaneously with the Abkhaz Supreme Soviet session, a rally of supporters of Gamsakhurdia was held several kilometers from the Supreme Soviet building. Rallies like this have been taking place in Sukhumi for 20 days now. At the rally, criticisms were voiced over the Abkhaz Supreme Soviet session.

Tengiz Sigua Gives News Conference 24 Jan

LD2401214392 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1614 GMT 24 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondents Igor Gvritishvili and Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 24 Jan (TASS)—The armed confrontation between the Georgian provisional government forces and former President Zviad Gamsakhurdia's forces will end in the next two or three days, Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua forecast at a news conference today.

He reported that formations began to leave Poti in the afternoon in accordance with agreements and that normal life will return there and that the port will begin to function by the evening. Concerning Zviad Gamsakhurdia's whereabouts, the prime minister said that the ex-president is either in Sukhumi or in Galskiy rayon, Abkhazia, and that it is possible that he will leave Georgia by tomorrow morning. In any event, Sigua stresed, the provisional government will not try to prevent this and is ready to help if it receives a request to this effect in writing from Gamsakhurdia.

The prime minister told the TASS correspondents that bread prices and public transportation fares, which have hitherto remained at last year's levels, will be raised in the next few days.

Commenting on the first stage of economic reform, he noted the importance of privatizing land and housing. These programs will be implemented very soon. Tengiz Sigua stressed the extremely grave condition of the Republic's economy. His information indicated that the crisis had primarily affected the fuel and power complex, forcing many enterprises to stop production.

The prime minister concluded the news conference by saying that the provisional government is taking measures to rectify the situation and is actively negotiating with the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] governments and with Western countries for urgent deliveries of vital food and fuel to Georgia.

Further on News Conference

OW2401214792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1849 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The head of Georgia's provisional government Tengiz Sigua has said that armed confrontation between the ruling Military Council and the supporters of ousted President Zviad Gamsakhurdia will be over within two days. Speaking at a news conference in Tbilisi the Georgian Prime Minister said that the negotiations betveen rival factions, under way in Western Georgia, "have yielded good results." In Lanchkhuti, Gamsakhurdia's supporters have agreed to leave the city and to lay down some of their arms.

In the meantime, there have been more talks in Zugdidi on the withdrawal of Gamsakhurdia's armed supporters.

Prime Minister Sigua confirmed the reports that a TUPOLEV-134 airliner had arrived from Groznyy to Sukhumi, the capital of Abkhazia. He said that the ousted president would board the plane today or tomorrow to leave Georgia, most likely for the capital of the Chechen republic.

According to some sources the airport in Sukhumi is controlled by the supporters of the former president.

The head of the provisional government also announced the Georgian authorities' decision to form a special commission for talks with South Ossetia. Prime Minister Sigua said that the talks would begin in Tskhinvali on Saturday [25 January].

In Poti, there has been a rally in support of a peaceful settlement. Later in the day negotiations on the city's peaceful surrender beteen Gamsakhurdia's supporters and the authorities got under way. IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent has failed to receive any confirmation of the rumors that the city's grain storage has been mined.

Reports on Talks

PM2701120092 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 2

[Report by Georgiy Ivanov-Smolenskiy and Besik Urigashvili: "Georgia: Not Peace Yet, But War"—headline as published]

[Text] Tbilisi—At the request of the inhabitants of the city of Poti, talks took place between representatives of the Military Council and Bakhtadze and Saliya, leaders of the armed formations supporting Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Under the accord reached, the armed supporters of the former president are to be withdrawn from Poti by 1700 on 24 January, and some of the weapons are to be handed over to representatives of the National Guard.

Thus, as Tengiz Sigua stated at a news conference, the threat of civil war in Georgia has finally been eliminated, since similar talks are also taking place with leaders of the armed formations in Zugdidi. It may be stated with nearly 100-percent certainty that these strongholds of the Zviadist resistance will be eliminated without bloodshed.

Over the period of the armed confrontation in Western Georgia, according to preliminary reports, two people were killed and seven wounded on the side of the Military Council formations; three were killed and 10 wounded on the side of the formations supporting Gamsakhurdia. Touching on the fate of the ex-president, Sigua said that he considers Gamsakhurdia's political career to be "finally and irreversibly over." According to the information of the provisional government and the Military Council, he is still either in Galskiy Rayon or not far from Sukhumi. However, Sigua refused to confirm a report from the Georgian general prosecutor that Gamsakhurdia is seriously ill.

Touching on the republic's economic position, T. Sigua described it as disastrous.

Sigua also announced that as of today Georgia's independence has been recognized by 23 countries. A note has arrived from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow speaking of the U.S. Administration's readiness to begin talks in the near future on establishing diplomatic relations with Georgia.

For dessert, Sigua briefed journalists on a telephone conversation with Murman Omanidze, foreign minister and first deputy premier in Gamsakhurdia's administration. According to Sigua, he is willing to return to Tbilisi and make his confession to T. Sigua, and then to go to the guillotine if need be. "I am prepared to hear him out," Sigua said, "but he would do better to repent in church, especially since the former vice premier is not in danger of the guillotine."

Further Reportage on Gamsakhurdia Situation

Gamsakhurdia Issues Appeal

LD2601183592 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 26 Jan 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Leaflets being distributed in Tbilisi carry the text of an appeal from Zviad Gamsakhurdia. This same appeal was broadcast at a rally of the president's supporters. Gamsakhurdia calls for peaceful resistance to the group of armed adventurists, as he put it. He states that the republican strike committee he heads intends to completely block the port of Poti and the railways, to cut off energy supplies, and to stop all freight that might reach Sigua's supporters. Gamsakhurdia assures that he intends to continue the struggle for the restoration to power of the legitimate government.

Plane Leaves Sukhumi

LD2601142892 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1403 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Report by TASS correspondent Viktor Voronyuk]

[Text] Tbilisi, 26 Jan (TASS)—Today, an airplane bearing the onboard number 65893, in which Zviad Gamsakhurdia had left Armenia, took off from Sukhumi airport. At first, the TU-134 set course for Moscow; then it turned around sharply and soon landed in Groznyy, the capital of Chechnya.

According to reports by Sukhumi airport staff, there were 20 passengers aboard the airplane. It is not known whether Zviad Gamsakhurdia was among them. Ramin Chelidze, a member of the staff of the press center of the provisional government of Georgia, gave this information to a TASS correspondent.

3 Supporters Arrested

LD2001190892 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0200 GMT 19 Jan 92

[Text] According to a Tbilisi report, since Zviad Gamsakhurdia was deposed the new authorities of Georgia have arrested just three of his supporters. They have been accused of commiting criminal offences. The Military Council stressed that none of Gamsakhurdia's supporters will be arrested for political reasons.

Acting Defense Minister Remarks

LD2401142892 Moscow TASS in English 1221 GMT 24 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent aleksandr Krasulin]

[Text] Moscow January 24 TASS—The Georgian Government is doing everything to avoid bloodshed in Western Georgia where Zviad Gamsakhurdia is hiding, Acting Defence Minister Lieutenant-General Levan Sharshenidze told TASS by telephone.

According to Sharshenidze, about 400 armed supporters of the president are now in Zugzidi, refusing to down arms. The government troops are not beginning the assault in hopes of settling the conflict by peaceful means.

The general is confident that Gamsakhurdia's last supporters will give up resistance in the city of Poti hours after government troops entered it.

He said fighting is likely to stop on the entire territory of the republic in two or three days.

The situation in Tbilisi, according to Levan Sharashenidze, is quiet on the whole. Telephone communications, radio and television have resumed operations in the republic. But the economic situation is extremely hard as fuel, especially furnace oil, is in short supply and all industrial enterprises have had to be shut down to ensure supplies of gas to homes.

Agreement Reached on Poti

AU2401170892 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Russian 1530 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] As Dzhaba Ioseliani, one of the members of the Military Council, told our correspondent, an agreement has been reached today with supporters of the former president on the restoration of normal (?town rythym) in Poti. Only the railroad [words indistinct]. The warring sides agreed that the supporters of the president will today name their candidate for representative of the Military Council in the town of Poti.

The supporters of the former president in Sukhumi [words indistinct] in order to (?get) to Poti, but they failed.

Troops Not To Enter Zugdidi

LD2501205492 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1900 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Excerpt] A leader of the Georgian Military Council, Dzhabe Ioseliani, has called on the residents of Zugdidi to act to avert bloodshed and advised the armed supporters of ousted President Gamsakhurdia in Zugdidi to leave that city. He offered guarantees that government troops would not enter Zugdidi if its residents were able to restore law and order on their own. [passage omitted]

Reconciliation Call Rejected

OW2601135892 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1241 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In Zugdidi, a city in the west of Georgia, Zviad Gamsakhurdia's supporters rejected the military council's calls for reconciliation, IF [INTERFAX] was told by the press center of the military council in Tbilisi on Sunday [26 January].

According to the press center, "anarchy and banditry are reigning" in Zugdidi; armed men loyal to Gamsakhurdia are terrorizing the local population. Electricity supplies to the city were cut.

Member of the military council J. Ioseliani said that Gamsakhurdia loyalists are finding it hard to form an authorized delegation to engage in talks. For the time being the National Guard units and "Mhedrioni" fighters the military council leans on are refraining from combat operations, said J. Ioseliani.

The process of stabilization began in the Black Sea port of Poti. Port facilities and the local railway are expected to resume work on Monday [27 January], the press center said.

There are reports that on Saturday [25 January] tensions aggravated in Sukhumi, administrative center of the autonomous republic of Abkhazia which is part of Georgia.

Western Area 'Information Vacuum'

LD2601180192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1506 GMT 26 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondents Igor Gvritishvili and Albert Kochetkov]

[Excerpts] Tbilisi, 26 Jan (TASS)—Over the past 24 hours, the troops of the provisional government of Georgia have expanded their control zone in the western part of the republic. The city of Zugdidi remains the last major stronghold of former President Gamsakhurdia. [passage omitted]

Western Georgia is still an information vacuum. No newspapers are being delivered there and there are no

radio or television broadcasts from Tbilisi. Telephone and telegraphic communications have been broken with many rayons. Gamsakhurdia's supporters have cut themselves off from the outside world and are hindering access to information about the activity of the provisional government of the republic.

The government troops blocked an armed grouping of Gamsakhurdia supporters, which some information says numbered up to 200 people, on the southern approaches to the city of Poti today. According to reports by the republic's Military Council, an ultimatum was presented to the enemy to surrender and lay down their arms, or else the government troops would be forced to use all the weapons at their disposal.

Protestors Block Government House

LD2601233592 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 2117 GMT 26 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast—read by announcer Tatyana Mitkova over still photo of Gamsakhurdia]

[Text] In Tbilisi and western Georgia the text of the appeal by Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who now heads the republican strike committee, has been publicized. It says: Let no one think that I, president of the Republic of Georgia Zviad Gamsakhurdia, am isolated from those actions of disobedience taking place everywhere. On the contrary, I am directing them in every way.

This appeal has provoked a fresh and larger wave of demonstrations in Tbilisi. According to the latest information, about 200,000 people are now blockading the government building where the present leader, Tengiz Sigua, is located.

Government Denies Blockade

LD2701103592 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1055 GMT 27 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondents Igor Gvrtishvili and Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 27 Jan (TASS)—The Military Council and Provisional Government of Georgia described yesterday's report by the night-time news broadcast of the first television channel that 200,000 supporters of the former president had surrounded and blockaded the residence of the new Georgian leadership as disinformation. The Military Council and Provisional Government stated that this report does not correspond to reality. The denial notes that such reports can destabilize the situation again and give rise to conflicts in western Georgia, where the dissemination of objective information is prevented by supporters of the former president.

Gamsakhurdia Said To Order Shevardnadze Arrest

LD2601183292 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1720 GMT 26 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondents Igor Gvritishvili and Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 26 Jan (TASS)—"When Gamsakhurdia ordered me to arrest Shevardnadze, I was taken aback," acting Georgian Procurator General Vakhtang Razmadze admits in the pages of SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA [Free Georgia] newspaper. The president reacted to this refusal with the words: "Someone else will be found to give the go ahead." After this the procurator resigned.

This dialogue took place in November of last year. It was preceded by the then president's demand for the arrest of distinguished representatives of the opposition. On his list were republic Supreme Soviet deputies, number of party leaders, former Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua, and others he called "traitors and turncoats"—a total of 28 people.

The newspaper comments that Vakhtang Razmadze recalls April 1985, when Gamsakhurdia was released from jail. According to Article 206, Section 3 of the Georgian Criminal Code, he should still be in custody today, the newspaper stresses.

Mi-8 Helicopter Reported Missing 22 Jan

LD2201193892 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1818 GMT 22 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Viktor Zhilyakov]

[Text] Krasnodar, 22 Jan (TASS)—An Mi-8 duty helicopter of an aviation enterprise in Sochi, which at 0900 departed from Adler for loggers, is missing. At 1500 it was supposed to land in the settlement of Otdalennyy in Apsheronskiy rayon. However, ground services had received no confirmation that it made a landing. The situation is complicated by the fact that communications with the settlement function until 1800 each evening and then cease until morning. At present everything possible is being done to clarify the location of the helicopter. A military An-12 aircraft is working on the helicopter's route, and at dawn tomorrow three Mi-8 helicopters will immediately fly out to the search area. It remains only to hope that the helicopter landed safely after all.